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THE PAPACY

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A HISTORY  
OF  
THE PAPACY  
FROM  
THE GREAT SCHISM TO THE SACK OF ROME

BY

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*BOOK III.—continued.*

THE COUNCIL OF BASEL.

1419—1444.



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE GERMAN DECLARATION OF NEUTRALITY AND THE ELECTION OF FELIX V.

1438—1439.

EUGENIUS IV. might triumph at Florence; but the fathers of Basel, weakened yet not dismayed, pursued their course with an appearance of lofty indifference. In January, 1438, they suspended Eugenius IV. from his office for venturing to summon a Council to Ferrara without their assent. The logical consequence of such a step was the deposition of Eugenius, and to this Cardinal d'Allemand and his followers were ready to proceed. But, although all who had any leaning towards Eugenius, or who had any scruples about the omnipotence of the Council, had already left Basel, there still remained many who did not wish to proceed at once to extremities. Motives of statesmanship and considerations of expediency landed them in a somewhat illogical position. Through their desire to support the Council without attacking the Pope they were nicknamed at Basel 'the Greys,' as being neither black nor white.<sup>1</sup> This party, though it had the weakness which in ecclesiastical matters always attaches to a party that is trimming through political pressure, was still strong enough to put off for some time the deposition of Eugenius. It raised technical points, disputed each step, and gave weight to the remonstrances against a new schism which came from the princes of Europe.

Attitude of  
the Council of  
Basel.  
1438.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Syl., *De Con. Basil.* (ed. 1700), p. 9. 'Quorum postea sectam Wilhelmus, Constantiensis Juris consultus, *Griseam* appellavit.'



Accordingly, says Æneas Sylvius, the question of procedure against Eugenius was discussed according to the Socratic method. Every possible suggestion was made, and every possible objection was raised against it. Was Eugenius to be dealt with simply as a heretic, or as a relapsed heretic, or was he a heretic at all? On such points the fathers differed; but they agreed on March 24 in fulminating against the Council of Ferrara, declaring all its procedure null and void, and summoning all, under pain of excommunication, to quit it and appear at Basel within thirty days.

It was, however, impossible that this war between the Pope and the Council could continue without exciting serious attention, on political grounds, amongst the European nations most nearly interested in the Papacy. Germany and France, about the same time, took measures to protect themselves against the dangers with which they were threatened by the impending outbreak of a schism. What Germany desired was a measure of ecclesiastical reform without the disruption of the unity of the Church. It felt no interest in the struggle of the Council against the Pope; rather the German princes looked with suspicion upon the avowed object of the Council, of exalting the ecclesiastical oligarchy at the expense of the Papacy. It bore too near a resemblance to their own policy towards the Empire, and they did not wish to be embarrassed in their own schemes by an access of independence to the bishops. Accordingly the Electors entered into correspondence with Cesarini in 1437, and lent their support to his efforts for a compromise between the Pope and the Council. When this failed, the Electors, under the guidance of Archbishop Raban of Trier, devised a plan of declaring the neutrality of Germany in the struggle between the Pope and the Council; by so doing they would neither abandon the reformation of the Church nor assist in creating a schism, but would be in a position to take advantage of any opportunity that offered. This scheme was, no doubt, suggested by the example of the withdrawal of the French allegiance

Declara-  
tion of the  
neutrality  
of Ger-  
many.  
March 17,  
1438.

from Boniface XIII., and had much to be said in its favour. The Electors had sent to obtain the assent of Sigismund when the news of his death reached them.

In March, 1438, the Electors met for the purpose of choosing a new king at Frankfort, where they were beset by partisans of Eugenius IV. and of the Council. They resolved that before proceeding to a new election they would secure a basis for their new policy. In a formal document they publicly declared on March 17 that they took no part in the differences between the Pope and the Council, nor would they recognise the punishments, processes, or excommunications of either, as of any validity within the Empire. They would maintain the rights of the Church till the new king found means to restore unity; if he had not done so within six months they would take counsel of the prelates and jurists of their land what course to adopt.<sup>1</sup> Next day Albert, Duke of Austria and King of Hungary, Sigismund's son-in-law, was elected king, as Sigismund had wished and planned.

This declaration of neutrality was a new step in ecclesiastical politics, and was equally offensive to Pope and Council, both of whom were loud in asserting that in such a matter neutrality was impossible. Both hastened to do all they could to win over Albert; but Albert was not easy to win over, nor indeed was he in a position to oppose the Electors. His hold on Hungary, threatened by the Turks, was but weak, and Bohemia was insecure. His personal character was not such as to afford much opportunity for intrigue. He was upright and honest, reserved in speech, a man who thought more of action than of diplomacy. Tall, with sunburnt face and flashing eyes, he took his pleasure in hunting when he could not take it in warfare, and was content to follow the advice of those whom he thought wiser than himself.<sup>2</sup> Ambassadors could do

Election  
of Albert  
II. March  
18, 1438.

<sup>1</sup> Müller, *Reichstagstheatrum*, i., 22, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Æneas Sylvius, in Palacky, *Italienische Reise*, 116: 'Fuit vir magnæ staturæ, venationis cupidus, in armis promptus, facere quam dicere malebat; non ipse per se cernens sed acquiescens consiliis eorum quos bonos existimavit; nigra facie, oculis terribilibus, malorum omnium hostis'.

nothing with him, and in July he joined the band of the Electors, and declared himself personally in favour of neutrality.

The example of Germany was followed by France. Ger-  
 many had taken up the attitude most in accordance  
 with its views; France proceeded to do likewise.  
 For the large questions of Church government  
 involved in the struggle between Council and Pope,  
 France had little care. Since their failure at Constance the  
 theologians of the University of Paris had sunk into lethargy.  
 France, suffering from the miseries of its long war with  
 England, took an entirely practical view of affairs. Its  
 object was to retain for its own uses the wealth of the  
 Church, and prevent Papal interference with matters of  
 finance. Charles VII. determined to adopt in his own  
 kingdom such of the decrees of the Council as were for his  
 advantage, seeing that no opposition could be made by the  
 Pope. Accordingly, a Synod was summoned at Bourges on  
 May 1, 1438. The ambassadors of Pope and Council urged  
 their respective causes. It was agreed that the king should  
 write to Pope and Council to stay their hands in proceeding  
 against one another; meanwhile, that the reformation be  
 not lost, some of the Basel decrees should be maintained in  
 France by royal authority. The results of the Synod's  
 deliberation were laid before the king, and on July 7 were  
 made binding as a pragmatic sanction<sup>1</sup> on the French  
 Church. The Pragmatic Sanction enacted that General  
 Councils were to be held every ten years, and recognised  
 the authority of the Council of Basel. The Pope was no  
 longer to reserve any of the greater ecclesiastical appoint-  
 ments, but elections were to be duly made by the rightful

<sup>1</sup> The term Pragmatic Sanction is explained by S. Augustine, *Coll. III. cum Donatistis*: '*Pragmaticum rescriptum quod supra præceptum Imperiale dicitur*'. Similarly Æneas Sylvius in his *Commentaries* says: '*Pragmaticam sanctionem quidam rescriptum principis esse dixerunt, nos melius sanctionem de causis possumus appellare. Pragma enim Græcè, Latinè, causam significat; apud Gallos autem Pragmatica sanctio lex est quædam de negotiis ecclesiasticis.*'

patrons. Grants to benefices in expectancy, 'whence all agree that many evils arise,' were to cease, as well as reservations. In all cathedral churches one prebend was to be given to a theologian who had studied for ten years in a university, and who was to lecture or preach at least once a week. Benefices were to be conferred in future, one-third on graduates, two-thirds on deserving clergy. Appeals to Rome, except for important causes, were forbidden. The number of Cardinals was to be twenty-four, each of the age of thirty at least. Annates and first-fruits were no longer to be paid to the Pope, but only the necessary legal fees on institution. Regulations were made for greater reverence in the conduct of Divine service; prayers were to be said by the priest in an audible voice; mummeries in churches were forbidden, and clerical concubinage was to be punished by suspension for three months.<sup>1</sup> Such were the chief reforms of its own special grievances, which France wished to establish. It was the first step in the assertion of the rights of national Churches to arrange for themselves the details of their own ecclesiastical organisation. It went no further, however, than the amendment of existing grievances as far as the opportunity allowed. It rested upon no principles applicable to the well-being of Christendom. While Germany, true to its imperial traditions, was content to hold its hand till it discovered some means of bringing about a reformation without a schism, France entered upon a separatist policy to secure its own interests.

The issue of both these plans depended upon the struggle between the Pope and the Council. Charles VII. besought the Council to suspend their proceedings against the Pope, and received an answer that it was doing so. On July 12, at a Diet held at Nürnberg, the Electors offered to mediate between the Pope and Council, but were answered by the Council's envoys that secular persons might not

The  
Electors  
vainly  
offer to  
mediate  
between  
Pope and  
Council.  
July to  
October,  
1438.

<sup>1</sup> It is given in full in *Ordonnances des Rois de France de la troisième race*, xiii., 267: briefly in Martene, *Amp. Coll.*, viii., 945, and in Mönch.

judge ecclesiastical matters, and that it would be a bad precedent if Popes and Councils were interfered with.<sup>1</sup> The Electors, with Albert's assent, extended the neutrality for four months. On October 16, at a second Diet at Nürnberg, appeared Cardinal Albergata, as the head of a Papal embassy; but the envoys of the Council, headed by the Patriarch of Aquileia, were received with greater marks of distinction. Eugenius IV. never again subjected any of his Cardinals to such a slight, but chose less important and more skilful diplomatists. The Electors again offered to mediate, on the basis that the Councils of Ferrara and Basel should alike be dissolved, and a new one summoned at another place. The Basel envoys replied that they had no instructions on this matter; they asked if the Electors accepted the decrees of the Council, and were answered in turn that envoys should be sent to Basel to answer this question. At Basel accordingly there was much negotiation with the German envoys, who were joined by those of the other princes, but the fathers resolutely opposed a translation of the Council, and rejected all proposals tending to that end. When the third Diet met at Mainz on March 5, 1439, matters had advanced no farther than they were at first.

To Mainz Eugenius sent no envoys; but many of his adherents were there to plead his cause, chief amongst whom was Nicolas of Cusa, a learned theologian, who had been an admiring follower of Cesarini, 'the Hercules of Eugenius' party,' as Æneas Sylvius calls him.<sup>2</sup> But the Electors now wavered in their policy of mediation, and began to turn their eyes to the example of France. They

The Diet of Mainz publishes its acceptance of some of the decrees of Basel. March, 1439.

<sup>1</sup> Patricius, ch. 80: 'Quoniam non liceret seculares principes de rebus ecclesiasticis judicare, neque esset utile reipublicæ ut principes videantur legem præscribere Concilio generali et Romano pontifici'.

<sup>2</sup> *De Concil. Basil.*, p. 9: 'Hercules tamen omnium Eugenianorum Nicolaus Cusanus existimatus est, homo et priscarum literarum eruditissimus et multarum rerum usu perdoctus, cujusque dolendum sit tam nobile ingenium ad illa schismatis studia divertisse, ut legatione ad Græcos vigore falsi Decreti fungeretur'. The last sentence refers to the fact that Nicolas was one of the ambassadors sent to Constantinople in the name of the minority, who claimed to pass their decree of May 7, 1437.



tended towards using the opportunity for establishing the privileges of the German Church. The Council sent again the Patriarch of Aquileia. But the German princes had by this time seen that a reconciliation between Pope and Council was impossible. They had an adviser of keen sagacity in the legist John of Lysura, sprung, like Nicolas of Cusa, from a little village in the neighbourhood of Trier.<sup>1</sup> He was the firm upholder, if not the originator, of the policy of neutrality. He now advised the Electors, if nothing were to be gained by mediation, to follow the example of France, and secure such of the work of the Council of Basel as satisfied them. On March 26 the Diet took the unwelcome step of publishing its acceptance of the Basel decrees concerning the superiority of General Councils, the organisation of provincial and diocesan synods, the abolition of reservations and expectancies, freedom of election to ecclesiastical benefices, and the abolition of annates and other oppressive exactions of the Curia. The Pope was not to refuse confirmation to the election of a bishop, except for some grave reason approved by the Cardinals. Appeals to Rome, until the cases had been heard in the bishops' courts, were, with few exceptions, forbidden. Excommunications were not to be inflicted on a town for the fault of a few individuals. Such were the chief provisions of this pragmatic sanction of Germany.

The state of things which now existed in France and Germany was really a reversion to the system of concordats with which the Council of Constance had ended. The rights that had then been granted by the Papacy for five years, and had afterwards proved mere illusory concessions, were now extended and secured. The strife between the Pope and the Council enabled the State in both countries to assert, under the sanction of a General Council, liberties and privileges which needed no

Hopes of  
Pope and  
Council.

<sup>1</sup> About Lysura see Æn. Sylv., *De Ratisbonensi Dieta*, in Mansi, *Orationes Pii II.*, iii., 66. At Basel he and Cusa were looked upon with equal dislike, and there was a saying current: 'Cusa et Lysura pervertunt omnia jura'.

Papal approval. Such a policy of selection was opposed equally to the ideas of the Council and of the Pope. The Council wished for adhesion to its suspension of Eugenius IV.; the Pope was not likely to acquiesce quietly in the loss of his prerogatives and of his revenues. Meanwhile, however, each was bent on using its opportunities. Eugenius IV. hoped by the brilliancy of his success at Florence to establish himself again in a position to interfere in European affairs. The Council trusted that, if it carried to extremities its proceedings against the Pope, Germany and France, after establishing reforms by virtue of its authority, would be driven to approve of a decisive step when it was once taken.

Accordingly at Basel the process against Eugenius IV.

Discus-  
sion at  
Basel on  
the heresy  
of Eu-  
genius IV.  
April,  
1439.

was prepared. The proctors of the Council gathered together a hundred and fifty articles against the Pope, swelling the number of charges to make the matter look more terrible,<sup>1</sup> though all converged to the one point, that Eugenius by dissolving the Council had made himself a schismatic and the author of a schism. It was clear that such a process might be protracted endlessly by a few determined opponents at every stage of the pleadings. The more resolute spirits, led by a Burgundian abbot Nicolas, carried the adoption of a more summary method of procedure. The Council was summoned to discuss the heresy of Eugenius and set forth the great points of Catholic doctrine which he had impugned. This discussion took place in the middle of April, and for six whole days, morning and afternoon, the dispute went on. First the theologians laid down eight conclusions:—

(1) It is a truth of the Catholic faith that a General Council has power over a Pope or any other Christian man.

(2) It is likewise a truth that the Pope cannot by his authority dissolve, transfer, or prorogue a General Council lawfully constituted.

<sup>1</sup> Patricius, ch. 72: 'Causidicorum more, capitibus centum et quinquaginta, ut res atrocior videretur, patribus proponunt'.

(3) Any one who pertinaciously opposes these truths is to be accounted a heretic.

(4) Eugenius IV. opposed these truths when first he attempted by the plenitude of the Apostolic power to dissolve or transfer the Council of Basel.

(5) When admonished by the Council he withdrew his errors opposed to these truths.

(6) His second attempt at dissolution contains an inexcusable error concerning the faith.

(7) In attempting to repeat his dissolution he lapses into the errors which he revoked.

(8) By persisting in his contumacy, after admonition by the Council to recall his dissolution, and by calling a Council to Ferrara, he declares himself pertinacious.

The Archbishop of Palermo, who had formerly distinguished himself as an opponent of Eugenius IV., now at his King's bidding counselled moderation. He argued with much acuteness that Eugenius had not contravened any article of the Creeds, nor the greater truths of Christianity, and could not be called heretical or relapsed. John of Segovia answered that the decrees of Constance were articles of faith, which it was heresy to impugn. The Bishop of Argos followed on the same side in a speech of much passion, which the Archbishop of Palermo indignantly interrupted. The Bishop of Argos called the Pope 'the minister of the church'. 'No,' cried the Archbishop of Palermo, 'he is its master.' 'Yet,' said John of Segovia, 'his title is "servant of the servants of God".' The Archbishop of Palermo was reduced to silence.

The discussion went on; but really narrowed itself to two questions, 'Has a General Council authority over a Pope? Is this an article of faith?'<sup>1</sup> The disputation at last ended, and the voting began. Three deputations at once voted for the conclusions of the theologians. The fourth deputation accepted the first three conclusions, but

<sup>1</sup> A summary of these arguments on the two points is given by Æneas Sylvius, *De Concil. Basil.*, pp. 16-42.

doubted about the last five; it hoped by delay to keep the whole question open. When the day came for a general congregation to be held, the Archbishops of Milan and Palermo prepared for resistance with the aid of the ambassadors of the princes. They pressed for delay, on the ground that the princes of Europe were not sufficiently represented. When they had finished their arguments, Cardinal d'Allemand made a splendid speech for a party leader. The princes of Europe, he said, were well enough represented by their prelates; the Archbishops of Milan, Palermo, and Lyons had said all that could be said. They had complained that the voice of the bishops was disregarded in the Council, and that the lower clergy carried everything against them. What Council had done so much to raise the condition of bishops, who till now had been mere shadows with staff and mitre, different only in dress and revenues from their clergy? The Archbishop of Palermo had said that his opinion ought to prevail because more bishops were on his side. The order of the Council could not be changed to suit his convenience; it had pleased him well enough so long as he was in the majority. Everybody knew that the prelates were only anxious to please their princes; they confessed to God in private, to their political superiors in public. He himself maintained that it was not the position, but the worth, of a man that was of importance. 'I could not set the lie of the wealthiest prelate above the truth spoken by a simple priest. Do not, you bishops, despise your inferiors; the first martyr was not a bishop but a deacon.' The example of the early Church showed that Councils were not restricted to bishops. If it were so now, they would be at the mercy of the Italians, and there would be an end to all further reforms. The Archbishop of Palermo pressed for delay only as a means of wasting a favourable opportunity. He threatened them with the anger of princes, as if the Council was to obey princes, and not princes the Council. They must cleave to the truth at all hazards. He ended by urging them to affirm the first

three conclusions, as a means of stopping the intrigues of Eugenius IV., and defer for the present the remainder in deference to the Archbishop of Palermo's request.

All listened with admiration to the dashing onslaught of D'Allemand. But on the attempt to read the decree affirming the three conclusions a scene of wild clamour and confusion arose, as had happened two years before. The Patriarch of Aquileia turned to the Archbishop of Palermo and cried out, 'You do not know the Germans; if you go on thus, you will not leave this land with your head on your shoulders'. There was a loud cry that the liberty of the Council was being attacked. Again the citizens of Basel had to interfere to keep the peace. The fathers were free to conduct their debates at pleasure, but a citizen guard was always present to see that arguments were not enforced by stronger than verbal means.<sup>1</sup>

When silence was restored, the debate was resumed for a while, till Cardinal d'Allemand again rose to put the question. The Archbishop of Palermo interposed, saying, 'You despise our entreaties, you despise the kings and princes of Europe, you despise the prelates; but beware lest, while you despise all, yourselves be despised by all. We have the majority of prelates on our side; we form the Council. In the name of the prelates I declare that the motion must not be carried.' There was a hubbub as of a battle-field, and all was again confusion. John of Segovia was sufficiently respected by both parties to obtain a hearing while he denounced the scandal of the day's proceedings, urged the observance of the ordinary procedure of the Council, and defended the authority of the president. His speech made no impression on the Archbishop of Palermo, who declared that he and the prelates of his party constituted the Council, and would not allow any decree to be published in the teeth of the protest he had just made. No one kept his seat; the rival partisans

<sup>1</sup> *Æn. Syl., De Concil. Basil.*, 60: 'Servaverunt semper hunc morem cives, ut in omni negotio adesse curarent, quod paritum dissensiones arbitrantur, illud præcipue adcauentes ne qui tumultus fierent, neve aliæ quam verbales rixæ'.



gathered round their leaders, the Cardinal of Arles and the Archbishop of Palermo, and looked like two armies drawn up for contest. It seemed that the Archbishop's policy would prevail, that the congregation would be ended by the evening darkness without passing any vote, and thus a substantial triumph be gained for Eugenius IV. The followers of the Cardinal of Arles loudly upbraided him with his incompetency: 'Why do you sleep? Where is now your courage and your skill?'

But the Cardinal was only waiting his time. When a slight lull prevailed he called out suddenly in a loud voice, 'I have a letter just come from France which contains wonderful, almost incredible news, which I would like to lay before you'. There was at once silence, and D'Allemand began to read some trivialities; then the pretended letter went on to say that messengers of Eugenius IV. filled France and preached that the Pope was above the Council; they were gaining credit, and the Council ought to take measures to check them. 'Fathers,' said the Cardinal, 'the necessary measures are found in the eight propositions which you have examined, all of which, however, you do not intend at present to pass; but I declare the three first to be passed, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.' Thus saying, he hastily left his seat and was followed by his triumphant partisans. He had snatched a formal victory at a time when defeat seemed imminent. He had shown that French craft was a match for Italian subtilty.

A few days afterwards arrived from Mainz the ambassadors of the Electors, from whom the opponents of the decree expected help in their resistance. But the Electors at Mainz had practically forsaken their position of mediators. They had seen the hopelessness of mediation unless supported by a general agreement of European powers. Private interests prevailed too strongly for this to be possible. Portugal and Castile were at variance. Milan and Aragon had their own ends in view in any settlement that might be made with the Pope.

Neutrality  
of the  
German  
ambas-  
sadors at  
Basel.  
May, 1439.

The attitude of France was dubious; and the Germans suspected that France aimed at getting the Council into its own hands, and reviving the French hold upon the Papacy. The Electors had no settled policy, and were content with a watchful neutrality. The German ambassadors did nothing at Basel, though an attempt was made to revive the national divisions, and procure joint action on the part of the German nation. On May 9, the German ambassadors were present, though by an accident, at a general congregation which accepted the form of decree embodying the conclusions previously passed. Again there was a stormy scene. The Archbishop of Milan denounced the Cardinal of Arles as another Catiline, surrounded by a band of ruffians. When the Cardinal of Arles began to read the decree the Archbishop of Palermo thundered forth his protest. Each side shouted down the other, to prevent their proceedings from claiming conciliar validity. The Cardinal of Arles rose to leave the room. His opponents prepared to stay and enact their protest; but a sudden cry of one who declared that he would not be untrue to his oath, and allow the Council to degenerate into a conventicle,<sup>1</sup> recalled all to a sense of the gravity of the situation. All felt that they were on the verge of disruption of the Council. The Cardinal resumed his seat; those who were departing were recalled. The Bishop of Albi read a protest to himself, for no one could hear him for the hubbub. The Lombards, Castilians, and Aragonese declared their adhesion to the protest, and left the congregation. The Cardinal of Arles then went on with the ordinary business, late though it was, and the form of decree was at last adopted. As the Archbishop of Palermo left the Council he turned to his followers and said with indignation, 'Twice, twice'. It was the second time that the policy of the Cardinal of Arles had been too acute for him, and had baffled his attempts at obstruction.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Syl., *De Concil. Basil.*, 74. "Absit a me," inquit Pater, "ut in vestro conventiculo maneam aut aliquid agam quod jurejurando a me præstito sit adversum."

For a few days the followers of the Archbishop of Palermo absented themselves from the meetings of the deputations ; and on May 15 the ambassadors of the Electors feebly protested that they did not assent to any proceedings which were contrary to the conclusions of the Diet of Mainz. Next day they tried to make a compromise, but failed, as the opponents of the decree could not make up their minds what terms they were prepared to accept. A session was held on the same day, May 16, for the publication of the decree. The greater number of prelates refused to be present. None of the Aragonese bishops, none from any of the Spanish kingdoms, would attend. From Italy there was only one, and from the other kingdoms only twenty. But the Cardinal of Arles was not deterred by their absence. He had a large following of the inferior clergy, and had recourse to a strange expedient to cast greater ecclesiastical prestige over the assembly. He gathered from the churches of Basel the relics of the saints, which, borne by priests, were set in the vacant places of the bishops. When the proceedings began, the sense of the gravity of the situation moved all to tears. In the absence of opposition the decree was read peaceably, and was formally passed.

On May 22 the ambassadors of the princes appeared in a general congregation, and took part in the business, excusing themselves for their previous absence on the ground that it was not their duty as ambassadors to mix with such matters. It was clear from such vacillating conduct on the part of their representatives that the princes of Europe had little real interest in the struggle between Pope and Council. They had ceased to act as moderators, and had no large views about the need of ecclesiastical reforms. They were content to gain what they could for their separate interests, as they understood them at the moment, and to let the whole matter drift. They were incapable of interposing to free the question of reform from the meshes of personal jealousy in which it had become entangled. So long as every power

The decree condemning the heresies of Eugenius IV. is passed. May 16, 1439.

which could interfere with their own projects was enfeebled, they were content that things should take their own course. The only man at Basel with a settled policy was the Cardinal of Arles; and he was no more than a party leader, bent on using the democracy of the Council as a means of asserting the power of the ecclesiastical oligarchy against the Papal monarchy.

Emboldened by his first triumph, the Cardinal of Arles pursued his course. The German ambassadors still urged a suspension of the process against the Pope. On June 13 a solemn answer was made by the Council that the process had now been suspended for two years in deference to the wishes of princes. They must not take it amiss if the Council, whose business it was to regulate the affairs of the Church, declined to delay any longer. Faith, religion, and discipline would be alike destroyed if one man had the power to set himself against a General Council, and bear a tyrant's sway over the Church; they would rather die than desert the cause of liberty.<sup>1</sup> The ambassadors were silent when, on June 23, the remaining five of the eight conclusions were decreed by the Council, and Eugenius IV. was cited to appear in two days and hear his sentence. The plague was at this time raging in Basel, and very little pressure would have sufficed to induce the fathers to transfer the Council elsewhere; but there was no real agreement amongst the powers of Europe. The session on June 25 was attended by thirty-nine bishops and abbots, and some 300 of the lower clergy. Eugenius IV. was summoned by the bishops, and when he did not appear was declared contumacious. He was declared to be a notorious cause of scandal to the Church, a despiser of the decrees of the Holy Synods, a persistent heretic, and destroyer of the rights of the Church. As such he was deposed from his office; all were freed from his allegiance, and were forbidden to call him Pope

Deposition of  
Eugenius  
IV. decreed at  
Basel.  
June 25,  
1439.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Patricius, ch. 91.

any longer. The dominant party in the Council had everything to win and nothing to lose by pursuing to its end the quarrel with the Pope. In the divided state of political interests there was a chance that some of the European powers might be drawn to its side if once a decided step was taken. But it forgot, in the excitement of the conflict, that the Council's hold upon men's obedience was a moral hold, and rested upon hopes of ecclesiastical reform. When this had been sacrificed to the necessities of a party conflict, when a schism and not a reformation was the issue of the Council's activity, its authority was practically gone. It required only a little time to make this clearly manifest.

The Council, however, did not hesitate in its course. On the day of the deposition of Eugenius IV. a consultation was held about future procedure; and the opinion of John of Segovia was adopted, to defer for sixty days the election to the vacant office of Pope. The position of the Council was discouraging. The plague, which since the spring had been raging in Basel, had grown fiercer in the summer heat. Five thousand of the inhabitants are said to have fallen before its ravages. Terror prevailed on every side, and it was hard to keep the Council together. The learned jurist Pontano and the Patriarch of Aquileia, two pillars of the Council, were amongst those who fell victims to the mortality. The streets were thronged with funerals and priests bearing the sacrament to the dying. The dead were buried in pits to save the trouble of digging single graves. Æneas Sylvius was stricken by the plague, but recovered. Eight of his friends amongst the clerks of the Council died.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See his account of the plague, *De Concil. Basil.*, 85, and *Commentarii*, 7. His own cure is thus described: 'Quoniam sinistrum inguen læsum erat sinistri pedis vena aperta est; tum die toto et in partem noctis prohibitus somnus; exin pulvis quidam ebibitus est, cujus materiam medicus revelare noluit; ulceri et loco læso nunc rafani viridis succi pleni incisæ portiones, nunc madidæ cretæ frusta supponebantur. Inter hæc aucta febris ingentem capitis dolorem et salutis desperationem adduxit.'



In spite of all danger and the repeated advice of his friends that he should flee before the pestilence, the Cardinal of Arles stood to his post, and so kept the Council together. At the beginning of October the business of the Council was resumed, and the method of the new election was discussed. The College of Cardinals was represented in Basel only by Louis d'Allemand. It was clear that Electors must be appointed. After some discussion their number was fixed at thirty-two, but there were many opinions about the means of choosing them. At last William, Archdeacon of Metz, proposed the names of three men who should be trusted to co-opt the remaining twenty-nine. The three whose high character and impartiality were supposed to place them above suspicion were Thomas, Abbot of Dundrennan, in Scotland,<sup>1</sup> John of Segovia, a Castilian, and Thomas of Corcelles, Canon of Amiens. At first this plan met with great objections; but they gradually disappeared on discussion. The Germans urged that they were not represented, and it was agreed that the three should associate with themselves a German, Christian, Provost of S. Peter's in Bruma, in the diocese of Olmütz. They took an oath that they would choose fitting men who had the fear of God before their eyes and would not reveal the names of those they chose till the time of their publication in a general Congregation.

Triumvirs  
appointed  
to nomi-  
nate Elec-  
tors for the  
Papacy.

The triumvirs at once set about their business. They conferred with representative men of every nation; they did their best to acquaint themselves with the characters of those whom they had in view. Yet they displayed singular discretion in their inquiries; and when, on October 28, they met to make their election, no one knew their intentions. Next day the congregation was crowded to hear their decision. Every-where speculation was rife. The more vain and more simple among the fathers displayed their own estimate of

Nomina-  
tion of the  
Electors.  
October,  
1439.

<sup>1</sup> 'Abbatem de Dunduno, Ordinis Cisterciensis, Diocœsis Candidæ Casæ' (Whithern in Galloway), *Æn. Syl., De Concil. Basil.*, p. 89.

their deserts by appearing in fine clothes, with many attendants, ready to enter the conclave at once.<sup>1</sup> Suspense was prolonged because the Cardinal of Arles was late. He appeared at last with a gloomy face, and took his seat, saying, 'If the triumvirs have done well, I confess that I am rather late; if they have done ill, I am too soon'. He was afraid that their democratic sympathies might have outrun his own. His words were an evil omen; every one prepared for a dissension, which in the matter of a new election would work irreparable ruin to the Council.

The triumvirs behaved with singular prudence. First Thomas of Dundrennan, then John of Segovia, explained the principles on which they had acted. They had regarded national divisions, and had considered the representative character of those whom they chose; goodness, nobility, and learning had been the tests which they had used. The general result of their choice was that the electors would consist of twelve bishops, including the Cardinal of Arles, which was the number of the twelve apostles, seven abbots, five theologians, nine doctors and men of learning, all in priests' orders. This announcement in some degree appeased the general dread. When the names were read, the position of the men chosen, and their distribution amongst nations, met with general approval. The Cardinal's brow cleared; he praised the triumvirs for their wisdom and prudence, and the Congregation separated in contentment. On October 30, after the usual ceremonies, the electors entered the conclave in the house *Zur Brücke*.

Amadeus  
VIII.,  
Duke of  
Savoy,  
candidate  
for the  
Papacy.

The Cardinal of Arles was, of course, ready with a nominee for the Papal office; naturally, he had not proceeded to extremities without making preparations for the result. If the cause of the Council was to succeed, it must again strike its roots into European politics, and must secure an influential protector. As other princes had grown cold towards the

<sup>1</sup> *Æn. Syl., De Concil. Basil.*, 91.



Council, the Duke of Savoy had declared himself its adherent. The greater part of the fathers now remaining at Basel were Savoyards. Amadeus VIII. had ruled over Savoy since 1391. He was a prudent man, who knew how to take advantage of his neighbours' straits, and had greatly increased the dominions and importance of Savoy till it embraced the lands that extended from the Upper Sâone to the Mediterranean, and was bounded by Provence, Dauphiné, the Swiss Confederacy, and the Duchy of Milan. Like many others, Amadeus VIII. had drawn his profits from the necessities of Sigismund, who, in 1416, elevated Savoy to the dignity of a duchy. The Duke of Savoy refused to take any side in the internal struggles of France or in the war between France and England, but grew rich on his neighbours' misfortunes. He married a daughter of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy; his eldest daughter was married to Filippo Maria, Duke of Milan, his second was the widow of Louis of Anjou. From his wealth, his position, and his connexions, the Duke of Savoy was a man of great political influence. But the death of his eldest son caused him deep grief and unhappiness. In 1431 he retired from active life, and built himself a luxurious retreat at Ripaille, whither he withdrew with seven companions to lead a life of religious seclusion. His abode was called the Temple of S. Maurice; he and his followers wore grey cloaks, like hermits, with gold crosses round their necks, and long staffs in their hands.<sup>1</sup> Yet Amadeus, in his seclusion, took a keen interest in affairs, and, when the suspension of Eugenius IV. was decreed by the Council, sent an embassy to the Pope excusing the Council, and offering to mediate. As matters went on his support was more openly declared, and he offered to send to Basel the prelates of his land. During the year 1439 Savoyards had largely reinforced the Council, and the scheme of electing

<sup>1</sup> See his life by Æn. Sylvius, *De Viris Claris*; in Mansi, *Orationes*, iii., 178. Æneas saw him at Ripaille, and says: 'Vitam magis voluptuosam quam penitentialem degebat' (*Comment.*, 3).

Amadeus as the future Pope had taken definite form. Amadeus had consulted other princes on the subject, and from the Duke of Milan had received the warmest promises of support. The electors to the Papacy had been chosen equally from the nations represented at the Council—France, Italy, Germany, and Spain. But, from its geographical position, Savoy was reckoned both in France and Italy. Of the twelve bishops amongst the electors seven were Savoyards; the others were the Cardinal of Arles, two French and one Spanish bishop, and the Bishop of Basel. Without any accusation of false play in the choice of the electors, it fell out that quite half of them were either subjects of Amadeus or were bound to him by ties of gratitude.

The proceedings of the conclave were conducted with the utmost decorum.<sup>1</sup> At its commencement the Cardinal of Arles reminded the electors that the situation of affairs needed a rich and powerful Pope, who could defend the Council against its adversaries. On the first scrutiny of votes it was found that seventeen candidates had been nominated, of whom Amadeus had the greatest number of votes—sixteen. On the next scrutiny he had nineteen votes, and on the third twenty-one. His merits and the objections that could be raised against him were keenly but temperately discussed, and in the final scrutiny on November 5 it was found that he had received twenty-six votes, and his election to the Papacy was solemnly announced by the Cardinal of Arles.

The Council published the election throughout Christendom, and named an embassy headed by the Cardinal of Arles, with seven bishops, three abbots, and fourteen doctors, to carry to Amadeus the news of his election. Probably from want of money, the embassy did not leave Basel till December 3, when it was accompanied by envoys of the citizens

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Sylvius, who was clerk of the Conclave, says: 'Nihil nisi honestum vidi' (*De Viris Claris*, 180). His account of the proceedings of the Conclave, *De Concil. Basil.*, p. 100, etc., is given in great detail.

and several nobles. On reaching Ripaille they were met by the nobles of Savoy. Amadeus, with his hermit comrades, advanced to meet them with the cross borne before him. Amadeus entered into negotiations in a business-like spirit, and rather surprised the ambassadors of the Council by stipulating that a change should be made in the form of the oath administered to the Pope, that he should keep his hermit's beard and his former name of Amadeus. The envoys replied that the oath must be left to the Council; they could not alter the custom of assuming a religious name; the beard might be left for the present. Amadeus also disappointed the Council's envoys by showing an unexpected care about his future financial position. 'You have abolished annates,' he said; 'what do you expect the Pope to live on? I cannot consume my patrimony and disinherit my sons.' They were driven to promise the cautious old man a grant of first-fruits of vacant benefices.

At last matters were arranged. Amadeus accepted his election, assumed the name of Felix V., and took the oath as prescribed by the Council. Then he left his solitude in Ripaille, and went in pontifical pomp to Tonon, where, amid the ecclesiastical solemnities of Christmastide, his friends were so struck by the incongruity of his bearded face that they persuaded him to shave. On the festival of the Epiphany he took the final step of separating himself from his worldly life by declaring his eldest son Louis Duke of Savoy, and his second son Philip Count of Geneva. By the Council's advice he agreed not to fill up the offices of the Curia, lest by so doing he should hinder the reconciliation of those who held them under Eugenius IV.; as a provisional measure they were put into commission. Felix V. also submitted to the Council's demand that, in the letters announcing his election, the Pope's name should come after that of the Council. On the other hand, the Council allowed him to create new Cardinals, even in contradiction to their decrees on this point. Felix named four, but only one of those, the Bishop of Lausanne,

Begin-  
nings of  
Felix V.  
January,  
1440.

as a dutiful subject, accepted the doubtful dignity, to which small hope of revenue was attached.

On February 26, the Council of Basel issued a decree commanding all to obey Felix V., and excommunicating those who refused. This was naturally followed by a similar decree of Eugenius IV. from Florence on March 23. Neither of these decrees was very efficacious. Eugenius IV. had strengthened himself in December by creating seventeen Cardinals, Bessarion and Isiodore of Russia among the Greeks, two Spaniards, four Frenchmen, one Englishman (John Kemp, Archbishop of York), one Pole, one German, one Hungarian, and five Italians. Unlike the nominees of Felix, all accepted the office except the Bishop of Krakau, who refused the offers of both Popes alike. The news of the election of Amadeus at first caused some consternation in the court of Eugenius IV. ; but the sagacity of Cesarini restored their confidence. 'Be not afraid,' he said, 'for now you have conquered, since one has been elected by the Council whom flesh and blood has revealed to them, not their Heavenly Father. I was afraid lest they might elect some poor, learned and good man, whose virtues might be dangerous ; as it is, they have chosen a worldling, unfit by his previous life for the office, one who has shed blood in war, has been married and has children, one who is unfit to stand by the altar of God.' <sup>1</sup>

Felix V. did not find matters easy to arrange with the Council. He stayed at Lausanne for some time, and did not comply with the repeated requests of the fathers that he would hasten to Basel. No steps were taken to provide for the support of the Papal dignity. The letter of Felix V., nominating the Cardinal of Arles as president of the Council, was ruled to be so informal that it was not inserted in the Council's records. Questions concerning the Council's dignity in the presence of the Pope gave rise to many discussions ; it was agreed that

Corona-  
tion of  
Felix V.  
July 24,  
1440.

<sup>1</sup> *Æn. Syl., Comment.*, ed. Fea, p. 79.

the Pope and his officials should take an oath not to impede the jurisdiction of the Council over its own members. Not till June 24, 1440, did Felix enter Basel accompanied by his two sons, an unusual escort for a Pope, and all the nobility of Savoy. On July 24, he was crowned Pope by the Cardinal of Arles, the only Cardinal present. The ceremony was imposing, and more than 50,000 spectators are said to have been present. Felix V. looked venerable and dignified, and excited universal admiration by the quickness with which he had mastered the minutiae of the mass service. No expense was spared to give grandeur to the proceedings; the tiara placed on Felix's head cost thirty thousand crowns. After this, Felix abode in Basel awaiting the adhesion of the princes of Europe.

The two Popes were now pitted one against the other; but their rivalry was unlike any that had existed in former times. Each had his pretensions, each represented a distinctive policy; but neither had any enthusiastic adherents. The politics of Europe were but little concerned with ecclesiastical matters; the different States pursued their course without much heed to the contending Popes. Germany was the least united State and had the least determined policy. To Germany both Eugenius IV. and Felix V. turned their attention; each strove to end its neutrality favourably to himself. The hopes of both parties were awakened by the death of Albert II., on October 27, 1439. He died in Hungary of dysentery, brought on by eating too much fruit when fatigued in hot weather. Albert in his short reign had not succeeded in restoring order in the Empire, in giving peace to the Church, or in protecting his ancestral kingdoms; but his noble and disinterested character, his firmness and constancy, had roused hopes in men's minds, which were suddenly extinguished by his untimely death. It became at once a question what would be the policy of the Electors during the vacancy in the Empire.

Death of  
Albert II.  
October,  
1439.

## CHAPTER X.

EUGENIUS IV. AND FELIX V.

1440—1444.

THE German Electors heard at the same time the news of the death of Albert II., and of the elevation of Amadeus to the Papal dignity. They refused to receive either the envoys of Eugenius IV. or of Felix V., and renewed their declaration of neutrality. Everything urged them to hasten their election to the Empire, and on February 1, 1440, they unanimously chose Frederick, Duke of Styria, second cousin of the deceased king and head of the house of Austria. Frederick was a young man, twenty-five years of age, whose position was embarrassing and whose responsibilities in Germany were already heavy. He was guardian of the county of the Tyrol during the minority of Sigismund, son of that Frederick who had played so luckless a part at Constance. Moreover, Albert II. died without male heir, but left his wife pregnant; when she gave birth to a son, Ladislas, Frederick became guardian also of Bohemia and Hungary. At his election Frederick was held to be sagacious and upright; but he was not likely to interfere with the plans of the electoral oligarchy. Representatives of the two Popes at once beset both Electors and King. Frederick III., unlike his predecessor, was not committed definitely to the policy of neutrality, and only said that he proposed at the first Diet to confer with the Electors about the means of amending the disorders of the Church. He took no steps

Election  
of Freder-  
ick III.  
February  
1, 1440.



to hasten the summoning of a Diet, which met at Mainz a year after his election, on February 2, 1441. Even then Frederick III. did not appear in person.

Meanwhile Felix V. had received the adhesion of a few of the German princes. In June, 1440, Albert of Munich recognised him, and in August Stephen of Zimmern and Zweibrücke came to Basel with his two sons, and did him reverence. Albert of Austria, brother of Frederick III., followed, as did also Elizabeth of Hungary, widow of the late king. On the other hand, Felix met with a decided rebuff in France, where a synod was held at Bourges to hear ambassadors of both Popes. On September 2 answer was made in the King's name that he recognised Eugenius IV., and besought his relative, 'the lord of Savoy' (as he called Felix), to display his wonted wisdom in aiming at peace. France had no reason to deviate from her old policy, especially as Eugenius IV. maintained the cause of René of Anjou in Naples. The Universities, especially those of Vienna, Köln, Erfurt, and Krakau, declared themselves in favour of Felix. It was but natural that the academic ideas, from which the conciliar movement sprang, should accept the issue which followed from the application of their original principle. The Council was especially anxious to gain the adhesion of the Duke of Milan, and Felix consented to pay a large subsidy in return for his protection. But Filippo Maria Visconti merely played with the offers of Felix. He promised to send envoys, but nothing came of it. In like manner Alfonso of Aragon adopted an ambiguous attitude. Both these princes wished to play off Felix V. against Eugenius IV. in Italian affairs, but saw nothing to be gained by committing themselves too definitely.

Thus Felix V. was supported by no great power, and the schism had little influence on the mind of Europe. Felix represented only the new-fangled ideas of the Council—ideas which had long deserted the sphere of practical utility, and so had lost their interest.

Adherents  
of Felix V.  
1440.

Felix V.  
and the  
Council.  
1440.

Felix and the Council were indissolubly bound together. The Council, in electing a Pope, had taken its last step. Felix could not dissolve the Council against its will, and was helpless without it. Yet, in spite of their close connexion, it was difficult to regulate the relations between the two. There was at the outset a difficulty about money. The Council had elected the Duke of Savoy as a man who would spend his money in its behalf. Felix demanded that the Council should make due provision for its Pope and his Cardinals. This could only be done by granting to Felix V. what had been taken away from Eugenius IV. The reforming Council must admit that it could not afford to carry out its own reforms ; there was no escape from this admission. On August 4 a decree was passed giving the Pope for five years a fifth, and for the succeeding five years a tenth, of the first year's revenues of all vacant benefices. It is true that the reason assigned for this special grant was to enable him to rescue from tyrants the patrimony of S. Peter. None the less it awakened opposition from the Germans in the Council, and was defended only by the fact that it was practically inoperative except in the dominions of Savoy. It brought little money ; and when, on October 12, Felix, at the instance of the Council, nominated eight Cardinals, amongst whom were the Patriarch of Aquileia and John of Segovia, the question of their revenues again became pressing. On November 12 six Cardinals were created to conciliate France. It was necessary to have recourse to the old system of provisions of benefices to supply them with revenues. Felix chafed under the restraints which the Council laid upon him, and took advantage of the absence of the Cardinal of Arles in November to preside over the Council, and pass some decrees which awoke much comment. When he asked to have the same rights granted to him over ecclesiastical benefices in Savoy as the Pope exercised in the States of the Church, the Council refused the demand.

Meanwhile Frederick III. gave no signs of his intention.

This indecision, which was the result of indolence and infirmity of purpose, passed at first for statesman-like reserve. Both parties looked to the Diet at Mainz for an opportunity of achieving a signal victory. They were disappointed to hear that the King found himself too much engaged with difficult matters in his own States to undertake in person the affairs of Germany. He sent four commissioners to Mainz, who were to hear the arguments of the rival claimants. Eugenius IV. had learned wisdom by former experience, and sent as his representatives two men skilled in affairs, but not of high dignity, Nicolas of Cusa, a deserter from the Council, who well knew the temper of Germany, and John of Carvajal, a Spaniard of great personal piety and worth, a trained official of the Papal court. The Council, on the other hand, sent its highest dignitaries, Cardinal d'Allemand and three of the new Cardinals, chief of whom was John of Segovia. John claimed to appear as Papal Legate; but when he was entering with pomp the Cathedral of Mainz the Chapter met him, and declined to admit his legatine authority, so that he was obliged to retire. The Diet decided to hear him as an ambassador of the Council, but not to recognise on either side the claims of any dignity which had been conferred since the declaration of neutrality. When the Council's representatives tried to resist this decision, they were told by the citizens of Mainz that their safe-conduct would be revoked within eight days if they did not submit to the demands of the Diet. They were driven sullenly to give way, and only the Cardinal of Arles received the honour due to his office.

Diet of  
Mainz,  
March,  
1441.

On March 24 D'Allemand appeared before the Diet, and pleaded the cause of the Council, while his colleagues remained sulkily at home. Next day Carvajal and Cusa answered him, and seemed to produce considerable effect upon those present, the Electors of Trier and Mainz, the king's commissioners, the ambassadors of France, and a few German nobles. Stung by

The Diet  
proposes  
a new  
Council.

the success of Cusa, John of Segovia laid aside his pride, assumed a doctor's robes, and with great clearness and cogency restated the Council's position. He produced a vast treatise, divided into twelve books, in which he had argued out at length the various points raised by his speech. Carvajal and Cusa replied. When John of Segovia wished to return to the charge the Diet ruled that it had heard enough. It is no wonder that it quailed before John of Segovia's treatise,<sup>1</sup> especially as the matter in dispute was one in which Germany took a political, not an ecclesiastical, interest. A paper was circulated amongst the members of the Diet, most probably the work of Jacob, Archbishop of Trier, urging the acceptance of whichever Pope would summon a new Council, to be organised by nations, and would guarantee to the German Church the reforms which it had claimed for itself. In accordance with this plan the Diet laid before the rival parties the old proposal that a new Council should be summoned in some neutral place with the concurrence of the kings of Europe. Six places in Germany and six in France were submitted for choice, and Frederick III. was to negotiate with the two Popes further arrangements for this new Council, which was to meet on August 1, 1442.

Both parties retired from Mainz disappointed, and beset Frederick with embassies. Frederick, who was rapidly showing himself to be a master of the art of doing nothing, said that he proposed to hold another Diet at Frankfort next year, when the question might be again discussed. He was not altogether satisfied with the policy adopted by the Diet. The Diet was ready to recognise the Pope who would grant to the German Church such reforms as suited the Electors; Frederick III. was desirous to recognise the Pope who was generally held to be legitimate, especially if in so doing he could further his own interests.

Frederick  
III. sum-  
mons  
another  
Diet, 1441.

<sup>1</sup> A summary of this discussion is given by Patricius, ch. 117, 118.

Pending the next Diet, the fathers at Basel composed and disseminated statements of their cause. Their proceedings otherwise were not very harmonious. There was the old difficulty about money. Felix V. complained that he incurred great expenses in sending out embassies and the like, while he received little or nothing. The Cardinals clamoured for revenues, and the officials of the Curia claimed their share of such money as came in. The Council granted to Felix a bishopric, a monastery, and one benefice in Savoy till he should recover the States of the Church. An outcry was raised against the excessive fees of the Papal Chancery; the officers answered that they only exacted the dues recognised by John XXII. Want of money led to a strict inquiry into the conduct of the financial officers of the Council; and this caused great bitterness. Felix sent the captain of his guard to imprison some who were accused of malversation. The Council loudly complained that their liberty was infringed, and called on the citizens of Basel to maintain their safe-conduct. The magistrates interfered, restored peace, and fined the Pope's captain. The Council urged on Felix to send embassies on all sides to set forth his cause. Felix answered that embassies were costly things, and as yet he had got little for his money spent on them. The Council, believing in the power of plausibility, commissioned the Archbishop of Palermo to draw up a letter to be presented to Frederick III. When he had done his work it did not satisfy them, and the facile pen of Æneas Sylvius was employed to put it into a more seductive form. The time for the Diet of Frankfort was drawing near, and Felix prevailed to send another embassy. His Cardinals at first pleaded their outraged dignity, and refused to go. Felix bade them disregard their clothes in the interests of truth and justice. The Cardinal of Arles, the Archbishop of Palermo, and John of Segovia accepted the office and set out in May, 1442.

Quarrels  
of Felix V.  
with the  
Council.  
1441.

Eugenius IV. meanwhile had asserted his authority by

decreeing, on April 26, 1441,<sup>1</sup> the transference of his Council from Florence to Rome, on the ground that Rome was a fitter place to receive the ambassadors of the Ethiopian Church, who were conducting an illusory reconciliation with the Papacy. It was a proud assertion of Papal superiority over Councils. An attempt was made by the more decided of the Electors to obtain the assent of Eugenius IV. to the policy which they had put forward at Mainz. A learned jurist, Gregory Heimburg, was sent to Florence with the proposals of the Electors, drawn out in the form of two bulls, one dealing with the new Council, the other with the liberties of the German Church. Eugenius gave no definite answer, as Heimburg brought with him no credentials. He deferred his answer to the Diet at Frankfort. But this negotiation showed a disposition on the part of the German princes at this time to take the matter into their own hands, without waiting for Frederick, whose dubious attitude was probably due to a hope of winning back from the Swiss cantons some of the Hapsburg possessions, with which view he did not choose to quarrel with Basel or with Savoy.<sup>2</sup>

On May 27 Frederick arrived in Frankfort with the three ecclesiastical Electors, the Count Palatine, and the Duke of Saxony. The Council was represented by its three Cardinals; Eugenius IV. by Carvajal and Cusa, as before. But they were not permitted to air their eloquence before the King. He decided, before entering the troubled sea of ecclesiastical disputes, to secure his position by the prestige of a coronation, and announced his intention of going to Aachen for that purpose. In his absence commissioners would hear the arguments of the rival en-

<sup>1</sup> Patricius, ch. 129, gives 1442 as the date of this translation. Mansi in his note on Raynaldus, *sub anno* 1441, proves that the first embassy of the Ethiopians was in 1441, and corrects the error of Patricius. The decree of translation was signed in 1441, though Eugenius stayed in Florence till the beginning of 1443.

<sup>2</sup> For these negotiations see Pückert, *Die Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, 170, etc.



voys, that on his return he might not find them contending. The Cardinal of Arles, as a prince of the Empire, accompanied the King; but at Aachen he was shut out of the cathedral by the bishop as being excommunicated. At Frankfort the Archbishop of Palermo harangued the royal commissioners for three days, and Cusa, not to be outdone, did the same. The weary commissioners asked that the arguments might be reduced to writing, which was done. On Frederick's return, July 8, they were laid before him, and the business of the Diet commenced. The plan of the five Electors for recognising Eugenius was, under Frederick's influence, laid aside. At Aachen he had signed a treaty with Zürich to help him to recover his ancestral domains. The Electors agreed to stand by their King, and leave in his hands the decision of the ecclesiastical question.

The policy adopted at Frankfort did not in its contents differ from that previously followed. Envoys were to be sent to Eugenius and to Basel, urging the summons of an undoubted Council. But the object of this new embassy was the glorification of the new King of the Romans. Six places were proposed for the Council, all in Germany, because in Germany was greater liberty and security than in other kingdoms, where war prevailed and scarcity was felt. Punctilious orders were given to the ambassadors as to the manner in which they were to observe the neutrality. Eugenius IV. was to be treated with the ordinary respect due to the rank which he had held before the declaration of neutrality. Felix V. was not to be treated as Pope. Everything was done to convince both parties that they must submit their cause to the decision of the German King.

German  
envoys  
sent to  
the two  
Popes.

From Frankfort Frederick III. made a kingly progress through Elsass and the Swiss Cantons, which received him with due respect. He was accompanied by the Cardinal of Arles, and proposals were made to him for a marriage with Margaret, the daughter of Felix V., and widow of Louis of Anjou. Frederick III. does not seem to

Answer  
of the  
Council.

have rejected the proposal. It suited him to take no decisive steps. He promised to visit Basel, but demanded that first his ambassadors should be heard, and an answer be returned by the Council, which, sorely against its will, was driven to consider the proposals of the Diet. After many discussions and many complaints, the Council answered that, though they were lawfully assembled and enjoyed full security at Basel, and would run many dangers in changing their place, still, in their desire for peace, they were willing to agree to the King's proposal, provided the King and princes would promise obedience to all the decrees of the new Council, and also would agree to choose the place of its meeting from a list which the fathers in Basel would submit. It was clear that such reservations made their concession entirely futile.

On receiving this answer Frederick III. entered Basel on November 11, and was honourably received by the Council. He maintained, however, an attitude of strict neutrality, and visited Felix V. on the understanding that he was not to be expected to pay him reverence as Pope. The interview took place in the evening. Felix V. appeared in Papal dress, with his nine Cardinals, and the cross carried before him. The Bishop of Chiemsee on Frederick's behalf explained his master's attitude, and was careful to address Felix as 'your benignity,' not 'your holiness'. Nothing was gained by the interview. Frederick was respectful, but nothing more. The marriage project did not progress, though Felix is said to have offered a dowry of 200,000 gold ducats provided he was recognised as Pope. Frederick left Basel on November 17, saying, 'Other Popes have sold the rights of the Church; Felix would buy them, could he find a seller'.<sup>1</sup>

The German envoys to Eugenius IV. were referred to a commission, chief amongst whom was the canonist, John of Torquemada, who raised many technical objections to their proposals. But Eugenius IV. refused to take advantage of the technicalities of

Frederick  
III. in  
Basel.  
November,  
1442.

Answer of  
Eugenius  
IV. De-  
cember,  
1442.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Sylvius, *De Dictis Alfonsi*, lib. ii., 46.

the commission. On December 8 he gave a decided answer. He wondered at the demand for an undoubted Council, seeing that he was then holding a Council which had done great things for Christendom, and to call it doubtful was nothing less than to oppose the Catholic faith. He did not call Frederick by his title of King, but spoke only of 'the Electors and him whom they had elected'. He was willing to summon more prelates to his Council at the Lateran, and leave them to decide whether any further steps were necessary. The answers of the Pope and the Council were formally reported to the envoys of the King and some of the princes at Nürnberg on February 1, 1443. They deferred their consideration to a Diet to be held in six months; but they fixed no place for its meeting. In fact, the German Electors were rapidly falling away from their mediatorial attitude, which had never been very genuine. No sooner had Frederick III. succeeded in checking their league in favour of Eugenius IV. than a new league was formed in behalf of Felix V. The personal and family relationships of the House of Savoy naturally began to tell upon the German princes. A man who had a dowry of 200,000 ducats at his disposal was not likely to be without friends. In December, 1442, negotiations were set on foot for a marriage between the son of the Elector of Saxony and a niece of Felix V. The Archbishop of Trier was busy in the matter, and stipulated for his reward at the expense of the Church. The Archbishop of Köln was a declared adherent of the Council. These Electors were indifferent which Pope was recognised: they only bargained that the victory should be won by their help, and that they should be rewarded by an increase of their power and importance. It was hopeless to attempt to secure for Felix V. universal recognition; but it would answer their purpose if he obtained by their means a really important position.<sup>1</sup> A league in favour of Felix V. was

League of  
the Elec-  
tors in  
favour of  
Felix V.  
1443.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. for these negotiations, Pückert, *Die Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, p. 195, etc.

definitely formed, and its success depended upon obtaining the support of Frederick III. or of the French King.

The plan dearest to Frederick III. was the recovery of the old possessions of the House of Hapsburg from the Swiss Confederates. His alliance with Zürich and his march through the lands of the Cantons was regarded by Frederick III. as an important step. But the jealousy of the Confederates was easily aroused, and the quarrels which had urged Zürich to seek alliance with Frederick soon revived. Zürich was called upon to renounce her alliance with Austria, and on her refusal was attacked. The war was waged with savage determination. Zürich was overmatched in numbers, but trusted to Austrian help. Frederick III. could raise no forces in his own dominions, where he had troubles on every side. The German princes refused to send troops to prosecute a private quarrel of their King. A crushing defeat on July 22, 1443, threatened Zürich with destruction, and Frederick III., in his desire for aid, turned to the French King, and begged to have the loan of some of the disbanded soldiers, who were the miserable legacy to France of the long English war. These Armagnacs, as they were called after their former leader, were a formidable element in the French kingdom, and Charles VII. was willing enough to lend them to his neighbours. But he also was ready to fish in troubled waters; and the embarrassments of the Empire suggested to him that he might extend his frontier towards the Rhine. Instead of 5000 troops, as Frederick III. demanded, he sent 30,000; instead of sending them to the Austrian general, he sent them under the command of the Dauphin. Eugenius IV. tried to use this opportunity for his own purposes. He conferred on the Dauphin the title of gonfalonier of the Church, with a salary of 15,000 florins, in hopes that he would attack Basel and disperse the Council.<sup>1</sup> In August, 1444, the French marched through Elsass, took Mümpel-

Frederick  
III. and  
the Swiss  
Confeder-  
ates. 1443.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, *sub anno* 1444, No. 13.

gard, and, spreading devastation in their way, advanced towards Basel. In a bloody battle on the little river Birs, by the cemetery of S. Jacob, not far from the walls of Basel, a body of 1500 Confederates fought for ten hours against the overwhelming forces of the French. They were cut to pieces almost to a man; but the victory was so dearly bought that the Dauphin made no further attempts to conquer Basel, or to fight another battle against the troops of the Cantons. He made peace with the Confederates through the mediation of the fathers of the Council, and retired into Elsass, where his troops pillaged at will.<sup>1</sup>

This was the state of things when, at the beginning of August, 1444, Frederick III. at last arrived at Nürnberg, to be present, as he had so often promised, at a Diet which was to settle the affairs of the Church. He had during the past year sent letters to the princes of Europe, begging them to consent to a General Council, which he, following the example of the Emperors Constantine and Theodosius, proposed to summon. He received dubious answers; it was clear that such a Council was impossible. The French King, in his answer, said that it would be better to drop the name of a Council, and bring about an assembly of secular princes; where were the princes there was also the Church.<sup>2</sup> Æneas Sylvius expresses the same opinion still more forcibly: 'I do not see any clergy who would suffer martyrdom for one side or the other. We all have the same faith as our rulers, and if they were to turn idolaters we would do so too. We would abjure not only a Pope, but Christ Himself at their bidding. For love has waxed cold, and faith is dead.'<sup>3</sup> For

Plans of  
Frederick  
III. meet  
with no  
success.

<sup>1</sup> For this interesting episode in Swiss history see Müller, *Geschichte der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft*, bk. iii., pt. ii., ch. x.; or more in detail, Barthold, in *Historisches Taschenbuch*, 1844; Tuetey, *Les Ecorcheurs*, Montbéliard, 1874.

<sup>2</sup> Æn. Syl., *Com.* in Fea, 84: 'Relinquendum esse concilii nomen; convenire principes bonum esse et in rebus ecclesiæ sese aperire atque componere; nihil se dubitare ubi essent principes quin illic ecclesia esset, conventumque illorum nullum prohibere posse'.

<sup>3</sup> Æn. Syl., *Epistolæ*, No. 54, ed. Basel.

tified by the proposition of the French King, Frederick III. put off his presence at a Diet till the need had grown urgent. He went to Nürnberg more interested about Swiss affairs than about the position of the Church.

On August 1 Frederick III. arrived in Nürnberg, where the Electors of Trier, Saxony, and Brandenburg awaited him, and were soon joined by the Archbishop of Mainz. Many of the chief German princes were also there. Frederick's first desire was to get help from the Diet against the Swiss Confederates; but in this he was coldly listened to, and when the news of the battle on the Birs reached Nürnberg the King was placed in a sorry predicament.<sup>1</sup> The hungry bands of France had ravaged the possessions of the Empire, and the Dauphin was already negotiating peace with the enemies of Austria, whom he had been summoned to overthrow. Frederick, crimson with shame, had to listen to reproaches which he could not answer. The only lesson which he learned from them was not to face another Diet, a lesson which for the next twenty-seven years he steadfastly practised. The Diet appointed the Pfalzgraf Lewis general of the army of the Empire against 'the strangers from France'. Frederick III., by his supineness, had lost his control over the German princes. A proposition which he put forward about ecclesiastical matters—to extend the neutrality for a year, and proclaim a Council to meet on October 1, 1445, at Constance, or, failing that, at Augsburg—was not accepted. The Diet separated without coming to any joint decision. The discord between the King and the Electors had at length become manifest.

Moreover, at Nürnberg the Pfalzgraf Lewis had been won over to the side of Felix V. by a marriage contract with Margaret, the daughter of Felix, whom Frederick III. had refused. Four of the six Electors were now leagued together in favour of Felix. It was a

Diet of  
Nürnberg.  
August,  
1444.

Felix V.  
deserts  
the Coun-  
cil of  
Basel.  
1443.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Sylvius, who was at Nürnberg, gives an account of the news that reached him, *Ep.*, 87.



question how far they would succeed. The dispute between the two Popes had passed into the region of mere political expediency and personal intrigue. The whole matter was felt to centre in Germany, and in the midst of these political intrigues the Council of Basel sunk to insignificance. Felix V. had found that the Council was useless to him, as well as irksome. Towards the end of 1443 he quitted Basel on the ground of health, and took up his abode at Lausanne. There he might live in peace, and be rid of the expense which the Council perpetually caused him.<sup>1</sup> Forsaken by the Pope of its own choice, the Council became a mere shadow. Its zeal and energy had been expended to little abiding purpose. After a glorious beginning, it had gone hopelessly astray, and had lost itself in a quagmire from which there was no escape.

The hopes of Felix V. entirely rested on Germany. Eugenius IV. relied upon the revival of his prestige as sure to tell upon Italian politics, in which the Papacy was a necessary element to maintain the balance of power. In Italy Eugenius IV. had been slowly gaining ground. In 1434 the condottiere bishop, Giovanni Vitelleschi, had taken possession of Rome in the Pope's name, and ruled it with severity. Francesco Sforza had, however, gained a firm hold of the March of Ancona. The Duke of Milan encouraged Bologna in 1438 to throw off the Papal yoke and declare itself independent; its example was followed by Faenza, Imola, and Forlì. The condottiere general, Niccolo Piccinino, in league with the Duke of Milan, beguiled Eugenius IV. into a belief that he was going against Sforza in the March. Suddenly he showed himself in his true colours, and prepared to enrich himself at the

Death of  
Cardinal  
Vitelles-  
chi. 1440.

<sup>1</sup> One of the few remaining memorials of the connexion of Felix V. with Basel is a bell in the cathedral, which bears the following quaint inscription:—

‘Te, pia Virgo, colo; tibi me dat Papa, Maria;  
Hic Felix quintus, qui germinat ut terebinthus,  
Me fieri fecit; Felix vocor: is sine vae sit;  
M, cum C quater X post tot, I jungito duplex’.

Pope's expense. Moreover, he planned an invasion of the Florentine territory, and was supposed to have drawn to his side the Papal general, Vitelleschi. Vitelleschi with a strong hand introduced order into Rome and the neighbourhood; he even waged war against Alfonso in Naples. He enjoyed to the full the confidence of Eugenius IV., over whom he had greater influence than any one else, and by whom he was created Cardinal in 1437. Vitelleschi was a condottiere influenced by the same ambitions as Sforza and Piccinino, and in Rome he held an independent position which tempted him to act on his own account. He was known to be bitterly hostile to Sforza, and was negotiating with Piccinino for the overthrow of their rival. When Eugenius IV. summoned to the aid of the Florentines the Pontifical forces under the leadership of Vitelleschi, the cautious Florentine magistrates were alarmed lest the understanding between the two condottieri might prove stronger than Vitelleschi's obedience to the Pope. They laid before Eugenius IV. intercepted letters of Vitelleschi to Piccinino. The favourite had many foes among the Cardinals, who succeeded in persuading the Pope that Vitelleschi was a traitor. But Eugenius IV. dared not proceed openly against a powerful general. Secret orders were sent to Antonio Redo, captain of the Castle of S. Angelo, to take him prisoner. On the morning of his departure for Tuscany Vitelleschi came to give his last orders to the commander of the Castle. Suddenly the drawbridge was raised; Vitelleschi was attacked by soldiers and received three severe wounds. He was made prisoner, and resigned himself to his fate. When he was told that his captivity would be brief, as the Pope would soon be convinced of his innocence, he answered, 'One who has done such deeds as mine ought either never to have been imprisoned, or can never be released'. He died on April 2, 1440, and the rumour spread that his death was due to poison, and not to his wounds.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Poggio, *Hist. Flor.*, bk. vii. Platina, in *Vita Eugenii*. Bonincontri, *Annales*, Mur., xxi., 149. Petronius, Mur., xxiv., 1123.

At all events, the Florentines were glad to be rid of Vitelleschi, and managed to persuade the Pope to appoint as his successor a man whom they could trust, Ludovico Scarampo, who had formerly been Archbishop of Florence. In June, 1440, Eugenius IV. conferred on Scarampo and his own nephew, Pietro Barbo, the dignity of Cardinal.

The fall of Vitelleschi freed Florence from the fear of Piccinino, for it restored the balance between him and his rival Sforza. But the Duke of Milan was growing weary of the indecisive war which he had been waging against the League of Venice, Florence, and the Pope. Sforza and Piccinino had won all that for a time they were likely to hold. All parties wished for peace, which was concluded at Cremona in November, 1441, on the usual terms that each should keep what they had won. Sforza also received in marriage the illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Milan, Bianca, whose hand had often been promised him, and often refused. Eugenius IV. alone was discontented; for Sforza was left in possession of the March of Ancona and other conquests in the States of the Church.

In Naples also the Angevin party, which Eugenius IV. supported, was gradually giving way before the energy of Alfonso. In 1442 René was driven into Naples and there was besieged. His only hope was to gain assistance from Sforza; but the Duke of Milan, jealous of his powerful son-in-law, set Piccinino to keep him in check, and Eugenius IV., who now saw in Sforza his chief enemy, was only too glad to do his part of fulminating against him.<sup>1</sup> Alfonso pressed the siege of Naples, which he entered on June 2, 1442. René was driven to flee from the Castel Nuovo, where the superb triumphal arch in the inner doorway still stands to com-

Peace in  
North  
Italy.  
1441.

Alfonso  
enters  
Naples.  
June,  
1442.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, 1442, II. In this Bull of deprivation Eugenius recapitulates all his wrongs at the hands of Sforza.

memorate the entrance of Alfonso.<sup>1</sup> René fled on board a Genoese galley to Florence, where he received the Pope's condolences, and afterwards betook himself to his county of Provence.

The fall of the Angevin party in Naples greatly affected the policy and position of Eugenius IV. He had little to expect from France, whose position towards the Papacy was now declared. On the other hand, he had much to gain from Alfonso, and Alfonso had shown by his dealings with the Council of Basel that his chief object was to bring the Pope to terms. By an alliance with Alfonso, Eugenius could obtain help against Sforza, and could also pave the way for a peaceful return to Rome. He had begun to feel that in a contest against a pretender the establishment of his Curia in Rome would add to his prestige. He had already decreed the adjournment of his Council from Florence to the Lateran, and it was worth while to make his hold on Rome secure. Moreover, he had gained little by his alliance with Florence and Venice; in the peace of 1441 they had regarded only their own interests and had paid no heed to his desires. Accordingly Eugenius IV. negotiated with Alfonso to recognise him in Naples, and legitimatise his son Ferrante, on condition that Alfonso helped him against Sforza. As this was a step alienating himself from the League and from Florence, Eugenius IV. found it desirable to leave Florence on March 7, 1443. The Venetians urged the Florentines to keep him prisoner, and only on the morning of his departure did the Florentines determine to let him go.<sup>2</sup> Yet the

Departure  
of Eugenius IV.  
from  
Florence.  
March,  
1443.

<sup>1</sup> This splendid example of Renaissance architecture is assigned by Vasari to Giuliano da Majano, but the inscription in S. Maria Nuova on the grave of the Milanese sculptor, Pietro di Martino, claims it for him. The frieze represents Alfonso in his triumphal car followed by his Court, the city magistrates and clergy.

<sup>2</sup> Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Vita di Agnolo Acciaiuoli*. 'La mattina che si partì papa Eugenio da Firenze, era stata grandissima disputazione di lasciarlo o non lasciarlo partire; perchè i Vineziani facevano quello che poterono che i Fiorentini lo ritenessino per forza.' See also Vespasiano's *Vita di Lionardo d'Arezzo*.

final departure was courteous on both sides, and Eugenius IV. thanked the magistracy for their hospitality. He betook himself to Siena, a city hostile to Florence, and, by so doing, gave a clear indication of his change of policy.

In Siena Eugenius IV. was honourably received, and concluded his negotiations with Alfonso. He also had an interview with Piccinino, and doubtless devised with him schemes against their common enemy Sforza. On September 13 he set out for Rome, where he arrived on September 28, after an absence of eight years. The Romans received their Pope with acquiescence, but without enthusiasm. Eugenius IV. settled down quietly into his capital, and proceeded at once to open his Council in the Lateran. But the Council of the Lateran was an empty form maintained against the Council of Basel, which was now weakened by the defection of Scotland and Castile, as well as Aragon. Eugenius IV. trusted to diplomacy to destroy the last hope of Felix V., by driving Frederick III. to abandon the German neutrality. Meanwhile in Italy he had important work to do in using his new allies as a means of recovering from Sforza his possessions in the States of the Church.

Eugenius  
IV. re-  
turns to  
Rome.  
Septem-  
ber, 1443.

In Italy circumstances favoured the Pope's policy. The suspicious Duke of Milan was always jealous of his powerful son-in-law, and wished to keep him in check. Alfonso of Naples was true to his agreement with the Pope, and in August, 1443, marched against Sforza. He was joined by Piccinino, and their combined army is said to have numbered 24,000 men, against which Sforza could only command 8000. Sforza resolved to act on the defensive and secure his chief cities by garrisons; but many of the leaders in whom he trusted betrayed his cause. His ruin seemed imminent, when suddenly the Duke of Milan interposed on his behalf. He wished to see his son-in-law humbled, but not destroyed, and so prevailed on Alfonso to withdraw his troops. Sforza was now a match for Piccinino, and succeeded in defeating him in

Death of  
Piccinino.  
October,  
1444.

battle on November 8. But Piccinino was rich in the resources of Eugenius IV., while Sforza suffered from want of money. Both sides retired into winter quarters, and as spring approached Piccinino had a superior force at his command. Again the Duke of Milan interposed, and invited Piccinino to a conference on important affairs. No sooner was Piccinino absent than Sforza hastened to seize the opportunity. He gathered together his starving troops, and told them that now was their last chance of wealth and victory. His skilful generalship outmatched Piccinino's son, who, with the Papal legate, Cardinal Capranica, was left in charge of the troops of the Church. Piccinino, already an old man, had gone to Milan with sad forebodings; he was so overwhelmed with the news of this defeat, that he died of a broken heart on October 25, 1444. He was a marvellous instance of the power of genius over adverse circumstances. Small in stature, crippled through paralysis so that he could scarcely walk, he could direct campaigns with unerring skill; though devoid of eloquence or personal gifts, he could inspire his soldiers with confidence and enthusiasm. He was impetuous and daring, and showed to the greatest advantage in adversity. But he lacked the consistent policy of Sforza, and saw, in his last days, that he had founded no lasting power. With his death his army fell in pieces, and no captain was left in Italy to match the might of Sforza.<sup>1</sup>

When the fortunes of war had begun to turn against the Pope, Venice and Florence joined with the Duke of Milan in urging peace, which was accepted on condition that each party should retain what it held on October 18. Sforza employed the eight days that intervened between the conclusion of the peace and the date for its operation in recovering most of the cities which had been won for the Pope. Eugenius IV. only retained Ancona, Recanati, Osimo, and Fabriano, and they were to

Fortunes  
of Fran-  
cesco  
Sforza.  
1444-1446.

<sup>1</sup> See Decembrio Candido's *Vita Niccolai Piccinini*, in Muratori, vol. xx,



remain tributary to Sforza.<sup>1</sup> His first attempt against the powerful condottiere had not met with much success. Next year, however, he was again prepared to take advantage of another quarrel which had arisen between Sforza and the Duke of Milan, and war again broke out. Bologna, which had been in the hands of Piccinino, proclaimed its independence under the leadership of Annibale Bentivoglio; but the Pope and the Duke of Milan both looked with suspicion on the independence of a city which each wished to bring under his own sway. In June, 1445, a band of conspirators, supported by the Duke of Milan, assassinated Annibale Bentivoglio after a baptism, where he had been invited to act as godfather to the son of their ringleader. But their plan of seizing the city failed. The people were true to the house of Bentivoglio, and slew the assassins of Annibale. Florence and Venice came to their help. There was again war in Italy with Sforza, Florence, and Venice on one side, the Pope, Naples, and Milan on the other. Again Sforza was hard pressed, and the Papal troops overran the March of Ancona. In June, 1446, Sforza made a raid in the direction of Rome, and penetrated as far as Viterbo. But the cities shut their gates against him, and he had no means of besieging them.<sup>2</sup> Sforza's ruin seemed certain; Jesi was the only town in the March which he held. But, luckily for him, the Venetians took this opportunity to attack the Duke of Milan, who, being ill provided with generals, needed the help of Sforza, whose ambition was henceforward turned to a nobler prize than the March of Ancona, which fell back peaceably into the hands of the Pope.

Thus Eugenius IV., by stubborn persistency, succeeded in repairing the mischief of his first political indiscretion, and obtained again a secure position in Italy, while the mistakes of the Council had done much to restore his ecclesiastical power, which had been so dangerously threatened. The leading theologians

Theological  
reaction in  
favour of  
Eugenius  
IV.

<sup>1</sup> Simoneta, *Sforza Vita*, Muratori, xxi., 361.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Mur., xxi., 377.

of the Council had been driven to quit it, and range themselves on the side of the Pope; only John of Segovia and John of Palomar remained true to the principles with which the Council opened. It is noticeable that the great advocate of the Council's power, Nicolas of Cusa, was now the chief emissary of Eugenius IV. Cusa had been taught in the school of Deventer, and came to Basel deeply imbued with the mystic theology of the Brethren of the Common Life. His work, '*De Concordantia Catholica*,'<sup>1</sup> written in 1433, represented the ideal of the reforming party, a united Church reformed in soul and body, in priesthood and laity, by the action of a Council which should represent on earth the eternal unity of Heaven. Cusa's work was the text-book of the Council; yet its author was disillusioned, and found his theories fade away. He quitted Basel with Cesarini, and in common with others who felt that they had been led away by their enthusiasm, laboured to restore the Papal power which once he had striven to upset. The Council of Florence gathered round the Pope an extraordinary number of learned theologians, whose efforts were now devoted to the restoration of the Papacy. Again, after the interval of a century and a half, the pens of canonists were engaged in extolling the Papal supremacy. John of Torquemada, a Spanish Dominican, whom Eugenius IV. raised to the Cardinalate, revived the doctrine of the plenitude of the Papal power, and combated the claims of a General Council to rank as superior to the Pope.<sup>2</sup> Now, as in other times, the immediate result of an attack upon the Papal supremacy was to gather round the Papacy a serried band of ardent supporters; if the outward sphere of the exercise of the Papal authority was limited, the theoretic basis of the authority itself was made stronger for those who still upheld it.

<sup>1</sup> See Cusani, *Opera*, Basel, 1565, vol. ii., and Dux, *Nicolas von Cusa*, ii., 252, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Summa de ecclesia et ejus auctoritate* (Venice, 1561); also *De summa potestate pontificis et generalis concilii*, in Labbe, xiii., and Mansi, xxx.

These labours of theologians were to bear their fruits in after times. The immediate question for Felix V. and Eugenius IV. was the attitude of Germany towards their conflicting claims. Germany was to be their battle-field, and diplomacy their arms.



*BOOK IV.*  
THE PAPAL RESTORATION.  
1444—1464.





## CHAPTER I.

ÆNEAS SYLVIUS PICCOLOMINI AND THE RESTORATION OF THE  
OBEDIENCE OF GERMANY.

1444—1447.

THE man who played the chief part in settling the ecclesiastical affairs of Germany was Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, whose life was closely connected with the fortunes of the Papacy in this crisis, and whose character reflects almost every tendency of the age in which he lived.

Early life  
of Æneas  
Sylvius  
Piccolo-  
mini.  
1405-1431.

Æneas Sylvius was born at Corsignano, a village near Montepulciano, in the year 1405, of the noble but decayed family of the Piccolomini. He was one of a family of eighteen, of whom only two daughters besides himself reached the age of maturity. As a youth Æneas helped his father to work in the fields, and picked up such education as his native village afforded. At the age of eighteen he left home, and with scanty provision of money betook himself to the University of Siena. There he applied himself diligently to study. Mariano Sozzini taught him civil law; the preaching of S. Bernardino kindled in him for a brief space the fervour of monastic devotion. The fame of Francesco Filelfo as a lecturer in Greek literature drew him for two years to Florence.<sup>1</sup> At last he settled in Siena as a teacher. But Siena was soon involved in war with Florence, and the prospects of literature seemed dark, when, in 1431, Domenico

<sup>1</sup> From a letter of Filelfo, quoted by Voigt, p. 17.

Capranica, on his way to Basel, needed a secretary, and offered the post to Æneas. The journey to Basel was difficult, as North Italy was involved in war. Æneas took ship at Piombino, and was nearly shipwrecked in a storm which suddenly arose. At last he reached Genoa in safety, and travelled through Milan and over the S. Gothard to Basel, where he arrived in the spring of 1432.

Capranica received from the Council the dignity of Cardinal; but Eugenius IV. refused him its revenues, and he could not long afford to keep a secretary. Æneas found a new master in Nicodemo della Scala, Bishop of Freisingen, and when he left Basel transferred himself to the service of the Bishop of Novara, with whom he went to Milan, and gained an insight into the policy of the crafty Visconti. The Bishop of Novara was one of the Duke's confidential agents, and sent Æneas to the camp of Niccolo Piccinino, while he himself at Florence plotted against the life of Eugenius IV., in 1435. When the plot was discovered, and the Bishop of Novara's life was in danger, Æneas took refuge with Cardinal Albergata, a man of strict monastic piety, whom Eugenius IV. sent as one of his legates to preside over the Council of Basel. On his journey thither Albergata visited Amadeus of Savoy in Ripaille, and Æneas was more impressed with the luxury than with the piety of Amadeus' retreat. From Basel Æneas accompanied Albergata to the Congress of Arras, where he had ample opportunities of learning the political condition of France and England. From Arras he was sent on a secret mission to the Scottish King,<sup>1</sup> most probably for the purpose of instigating him to act as a check upon England in case the resentment of the English King were aroused by the pacification of Arras, which was detrimental to English interests.

<sup>1</sup> In *Pii II. Commentarii*, the reason Æneas gives is 'qui prælatum quemdam in regis gratiam reduceret'. In *De Viris Claris*, xxxii., he says, 'pro liberatione cujusdam captivi'. Campanus, *Vita Pii*, says, 'ad Regem adversus citeriores Britannos qui paci adversabantur sollicitandum'.

Æneas as  
secretary.  
1432-1435.

The remarks on England and Scotland made by the keen-sighted Italian are interesting, not only in themselves but as showing the quickening power which the new learning had given to the faculty of observation. Men's interests were rapidly enlarging, their curiosity was awakened, they looked on the world as their dwelling-place, and all things human had an attraction for their own sake. Æneas writes in the spirit of a modern traveller, and his picture is vivid and precise. He went to Calais, but was suspected by the English, who would neither allow him to go on nor return. At length the interference of the Cardinal of Winchester enabled him to set sail for London. London struck him as the wealthiest and most populous city he had seen. He admired the grandeur of S. Paul's Cathedral, and in the sacristy was shown a Latin translation of Thucydides, which, he says, dated from the ninth century.<sup>1</sup> He was struck by the noble river Thames and the old London Bridge, covered with houses, like a city in itself. He heard and recorded the legend that the men of Strood were born with tails. But, above all else, he was amazed by the shrine of S. Thomas at Canterbury, covered with diamants, pearls, and carbuncles, to which nothing less precious than silver was offered. He failed, however, in the object of his visit, as the English court was too suspicious of the secretary of Cardinal Albergata to give him a safe-conduct to Scotland. Æneas was obliged to return to Bruges; but determined not to be baffled, he again took ship at Sluys and set sail for Scotland. A terrible storm drove the ship to Norway, and only after a voyage of twelve days did Æneas land at Dunbar. He had made a vow in his peril to walk barefoot to the nearest shrine of Our Lady. A pilgrimage of ten miles to the shrine of Whitekirk, through the snow and ice, was the beginning of an attack of gout in the feet, from which he suffered for the rest of his life.

<sup>1</sup> *Epistolæ*, cxxvi., ed. Basil. 'Apud Angliam in sacrario nobilis ædis S. Pauli Londiniensis vetus historia in manus venit, ante annos sexcentos, ut signatum erat, conscripta. . . . Auctor historiæ Thucydides Græcus annotatus erat, quem fama celebrem clarum novimus, translatoris nullum nomen inveni.'

Æneas in  
England  
and Scot-  
land. 1435.

Æneas describes Scotland as a cold, barren, treeless country. Its towns were unwalled; the houses were built without mortar, were roofed with turf, and had doors of ox-hide. The people were poor and rough; the men small but courageous, the women fair and amorously disposed. The Italian was surprised at the freedom of manners in the intercourse of the sexes. The Scots exported hides, wool, and salt fish to Flanders; they had better oysters than England. The Highland and the Lowland Scots spoke a different language; and the Highlanders lived on the bark of trees. They dug a sulphurous stone out of the ground which they used for fuel. In winter their daylight lasted scarcely more than four hours. There was nothing the Scots heard with greater pleasure than abuse of the English.

Æneas was well received by the Scottish King, who gave him fifty nobles and two horses.<sup>1</sup> When he had done his business, the captain of the ship, in which he had come, offered him a passage back. But Æneas had had enough experience of the North Sea, and determined to return through England. The ship set sail and was wrecked before his eyes in sight of land. The captain, who was going home to be married, and all the crew save four, were drowned. Thankful for his providential escape, Æneas, disguised as a merchant, crossed the Tweed, and entered the wild border country. He spent a troubled night amid a throng of barbarous people who encamped, rather than lived, in the desolate plain of Northumberland. When night came on,

<sup>1</sup> It is curious how Æneas picked up odd scraps of information. He says: 'Cornicem novam esse, atque idcirco arborem in qua nidificaverit, regio fisco cedere'. This seems unintelligible; yet a law was passed in the first Parliament of James I., 1424, *Acts and Constitutions of Scotland*: 'Of bigging of Ruikis in Treis, Ca., xxi. Item, forthy that mē consideris that Ruikis biggand in Kirkis, Zairdis, Orchardis, or Treis, dois greit skaith apone Cornis, It is ordanit, that thay, that sie Treis pertenis to, lat thame to big, and suffer on na wyse that thair Birdis fle away. And quhair it be taintit that thay big, and the Birdis be flowin, and the nest be fundin in the Treis at Beltane, the Treis sal be forfaitit to the King and hewin down, and v. s. to the kingis unlaw.' 'Beltane' seems to be the name of an old pagan festival which was transferred to Whitsunday.

the men departed to a tower of defence, fearing a possible raid of the Scots. They left the women, saying that the Scots would not injure them, and refused to take Æneas with them. He and his three attendants stayed amid some hundred women who huddled round the watch fire. In the night an alarm was raised that the Scots were coming. The women fled; but Æneas, fearing he might lose his way, took refuge in a stable. It was, however, a false alarm, as the approaching band turned out to be friends, not foes. At dawn he set out for Newcastle, and saw the mighty tower which Cæsar had built. Here once more he was in a civilised country. At Durham he admired the tomb of the Venerable Bede. He found York a large and populous city, with a cathedral memorable throughout the world, with glass walls between slender pillars.<sup>1</sup> He travelled to London with one of the Justices in Eyre, who, little suspecting the real character of his companion, denounced to Æneas the wicked machinations of Cardinal Albergata at Arras. In London Æneas found that a royal order forbade any foreigner to sail without the King's permission. A judicious bribe overcame the guards of the harbour. Æneas set sail from Dover, and made his way safely to Basel.

For a time Æneas remained at Basel, where he led a jovial and careless life, making himself agreeable to men of all parties, and gaining a reputation for his elegant Latinity. When the combat between Pope and Council broke out, he was driven to take a side; but he did so dispassionately, with a clear perception of the selfish motives of the various parties.<sup>2</sup> He first came prominently forward in an eloquent speech in favour of Pavia as a meeting place with the Greeks; by this step he hoped to win the favour of the Duke of Milan, whose character he well knew. He was thanked by the Duke, and won the

Æneas a  
partisan  
of the  
Council  
of Basel.  
1435-1437.

<sup>1</sup> 'Sacellum lucidissimum, cujus parietes vitrei inter columnas ad medium tenerissimas colligati tenentur.'—*Com.*, 5.

<sup>2</sup> 'Apud quem sit veritas Deus viderit: ego non video neque, si video, scribere ausim,' he writes in May, 1437. *Mansi*, xxxi., 227.

favour of the Archbishop of Milan, who presented him, though a layman, to a provostship in the Church of S. Lorenzo in Milan. To hold this as a layman, and without capitular election, he needed a dispensation from the Council, which had just prohibited the Pope from similar abuses in conferring patronage. There were many who grudged the young favourite his success, and the application met with some opposition in a general congregation. But the honeyed tongue of Æneas won the day: 'You will act, fathers, as you think fit; but, if you decide in my favour, I would prefer this token of your good-will without possession of the provostship to its possession by any capitular election'. After this the objectors were silenced by a shout of applause, and Æneas obtained his dispensation. When he reached Milan, he found another in possession, by the nomination of the Duke and the election of the Chapter; but Æneas won over the Duke, as he had won over the Council, and his rival was forced to give way. On his return to Basel he was nominated by the Archbishop of Milan to preach before the Council on the feast of S. Ambrose. The theologians were scandalised at this preference of a layman, but the Council enjoyed the polished rhetoric of Æneas more than the ponderous and shapeless erudition of men like John of Segovia.

Æneas was now bound to the Council by his provostship, and showed himself a keen partisan. His pen was busily employed in attacking Eugenius IV. In the Council he was a person of importance, and held high positions. He was often one of the Committee of Twelve which regulated its affairs. He often presided over the Deputation of Faith. He went on several embassies into Germany, and accompanied the Bishop of Novara to Vienna in 1438, to congratulate Albert on his accession to the throne. On his return to Basel he narrowly escaped death from the plague; in fact, the rumour of his death was spread, and the Duke of Milan took advantage of it to confer his provostship of S. Lorenzo on a nominee of Eugenius IV. The policy of the Duke had changed; he was no longer on

Æneas  
made sec-  
retary to  
Felix.  
1439.



the side of the Council, and did not need the services of Æneas. The Council was bound to recompense its adherent, and conferred on Æneas a canonry in the Church of Trent. Again Æneas found another in possession, and again he succeeded in ousting him.

Soon after this came the Papal election at Basel. So great was the reputation of Æneas that he was urged to qualify for the post of an elector by taking orders; the Council offered him a dispensation to allow him to proceed on one day to the sub-diaconate and diaconate. But Æneas had no taste for the restrictions of clerical life, or, at least, did not consider the inducement to be sufficient to lead him to undertake them. He acted, however, as master of ceremonies to the Conclave, and on the election of Amadeus was one of those deputed by the Council to escort the new Pope to Basel. Felix V. made Æneas one of his secretaries, and it would now seem as though Æneas had cast in his lot for life.

Æneas, however, soon began to see that with the election of Felix V. the Council had practically abdicated its position. He did not hope for much from the wisdom or generosity of the Council's Pope. On all sides he saw that men who had any future before them were leaving the Council, and joining the side of Eugenius IV. For himself such a course of conduct was impossible. He was still a young man, and his reputation had been entirely made in the democratic surroundings of the Council. He had made himself remarkable in the eyes of Eugenius IV. only by the keenness of his attacks upon the Curia. He had no previous services to plead, no weight to bring to Eugenius' side, no position which he could use in Eugenius' favour. It was useless for him to desert to Eugenius, and equally useless to stay with Felix. In this dilemma he resolved to identify himself with the neutral policy of Germany.<sup>1</sup> He took advantage of the negotiations

Æneas  
crowned  
poet by  
Frederick  
III. June,  
1442.

<sup>1</sup> He says so himself in his life of the Bishop of Novara, *De Viris Claris*, v., in Mansi, *Orationes*, iii., 149: 'Cum Felicem omnes relinquerent, nec ejus papatum amplecti vellent, ego ad Fredericum Cæsarem me recepi, nec enim volui statim de parte ad partem transire'.

of Felix V. to ingratiate himself with the Bishop of Chiemsee, one of Frederick's chief counsellors. The bishop was struck by the cleverness of the young Italian and his capacity for writing letters. He recommended him to his master, and persuaded Frederick III. to confer on Æneas the ridiculous honour of crowning him with the laurel wreath as Imperial poet. We cannot guess how Frederick was induced to revive this distinction, which had been bestowed on Petrarck; but Æneas was proud of the title of 'poet,' with which he afterwards adorned his name.<sup>1</sup>

Æneas was offered the post of secretary at Frederick's court; but he did not deem it judicious to desert abruptly the service of Felix V. He went back to Basel, and endeavoured to persuade Felix that he could serve his interests better at Vienna than at Basel. He so far prevailed that, when Frederick visited Basel in 1442, Felix reluctantly gave his consent to this arrangement, and Æneas left Basel in Frederick's train never to return. No sooner had Æneas changed his masters than he changed his opinions also. Felix V. was disappointed if he thought that the shrewd Italian would have any feeling of loyalty towards a losing cause. Æneas tried to renew his connexion with the Duke of Milan, and win back his Milanese provostship: he loudly proclaimed that under Frederick III. he identified himself with the policy of neutrality.<sup>2</sup>

At Vienna Æneas found that he had to begin his career afresh. He was only one amongst a crowd of hungry secretaries, all aspirants for higher office, and all united in disliking the Italian intruder. In the small matters of their common life Æneas was given the lowest place at table and the worst

<sup>1</sup> The diploma, dated Frankfort, July 27, 1442, is given in Chmel's *Regesta Frederici III.*, Anhang xxix.: 'Nos cupientes antecessorum nostrorum imitari vestigia, qui poetas egregios in morem triumphantium, ut accepimus, solebant in Capitolio coronare . . . convertimus aciem mentis nostræ in poetam eximium et præclarum Æneam Silvium,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter to Bishop of Milan (*Opera*, Basel ed., No. 29), dated December, 1442; also Nos. 30, 53.

bed; he was the object of the sarcasms of his companions. But Æneas bore all things with equanimity, and was content to bide his time.<sup>1</sup> He attached himself to the Chancellor, Kaspar Schlick, a man whose career had many points in common with his own.

Kaspar Schlick was sprung from a good citizen family in Franconia, and in 1416 entered Sigismund's chancery as a secretary. He had little learning; but his native shrewdness was developed by the teaching of experience, and his industry recommended him for employment. He went on many diplomatic missions, and followed Sigismund in his eventful journeys through Europe. He became Sigismund's trusted adviser and friend, not only in matters of state, but in the many amorous intrigues in which Sigismund delighted to engage. Sigismund conferred on him riches and distinctions, and Sigismund's successors found that Schlick's intimate knowledge of affairs, especially in finance, rendered his services indispensable. He continued to be Chancellor under Albert II. and Frederick III. To him Æneas first turned as to a patron,<sup>2</sup> and approached him with an elaborate eulogy in Latin verse. Schlick knew something of Æneas, for during his stay at Siena with Sigismund he had been entertained by an aunt of Æneas, and had acted as godfather for one of her children. He took Æneas under his care, secured him a regular salary, gave him a place at his own table, and counted on his assistance in personal matters. Schlick was an ignoble politician; with much acuteness and great capacity for affairs, he had a narrow and sordid mind. He was greedy of small gains, and this greed grew upon him with increasing age; in all that he did he had some personal interest to serve. At first Æneas wished to play the part of Horace to a second Mæcenæ; but he soon learned to change his strain, and

Æneas  
and  
Kaspar  
Schlick.

<sup>1</sup> *Com.*, 9: 'Cum statuisset malum in bono vincere aurículas declinavit, ut iniquæ mentis asellus, cum gravius dorso subit onus'.

<sup>2</sup> See his letter of December 23, 1442, given by Voigt in *Archiv für Kunde Oesterreichischer Geschichts-Quellen*, vol. xvi., p. 338.

adapt himself to the requirements of his patron's practical nature.<sup>1</sup> Verses disappeared, and political jobbery took their place. It was not long before Æneas was required to exercise his ingenuity in the Chancellor's behalf. The Bishop of Freising died in August, 1443, and the Chancellor wished to obtain the rich bishopric for his brother, Heinrich Schlick, a man who had nothing but his powerful relationship to recommend him. The chapter elected Johann Grünwalder, one of the Cardinals of Felix V., a natural son of the Duke of Baiern-München, and called on the Council of Basel to confirm the nomination. Æneas wrote to the Cardinal d'Allemand, urging the impolicy of alienating so powerful a man as the Chancellor.<sup>2</sup> The Council, however, confirmed the election of Grünwalder, and Schlick applied to Eugenius IV., who, after some skilful negotiations, confirmed his brother. The struggle between the rival claimants lasted for some years; but its immediate effect was to draw Kaspar Schlick towards the side of Eugenius IV., and Æneas readily followed his master. After all his services to the Council, he had neither obtained any promotion for himself, nor could he help a friend by his arguments.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, at Vienna Æneas met Cardinal Cesarini, who had been appointed by Eugenius IV. legate in Hungary for the purpose of warring against the Turks. Hungarian affairs needed rather delicate management at the Court of Vienna. After the death of Albert II. his wife bore a son, Ladislas, of whom

Æneas  
drifts to  
the side of  
Eugenius  
IV. 1443-  
4.

<sup>1</sup> See his letter No. 102, written in the character of a contented man of letters seeking only for ease and free from ambition. It ends: 'Et potissime si tu mihi Gaspar favebis, vitæ præsidium et dulce decus meum'.

<sup>2</sup> *Epistolæ*, No. 183.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to a friend at Basel, dated October, 1443, printed by Voigt, *Kunde für Oest. Geschichts-Quellen*, xvi., 345, he says: 'Fuerunt in hanc sententiam verba vestra, quæ ultimo ad me pronuntiastis Basileæ, cum diceretis S. D. nostrum F. (Felicem) mihi absenti quam præsentem de aliquo beneficio provisurum esse, vestrasque operas ad id spopondistis, cujus rei nullus secutus est effectus, tametsi multis ego in rebus apud Cæsaream majestatem S. D. nostro profuerim et dietim prosim'.

Frederick III. was guardian. But the Hungarian nobles did not think it wise to run the risks of a long minority in such perilous times. They chose as their king Wladislaw of Poland, and Eugenius IV. approved their choice. Frederick III. could not venture on war, and Kaspar Schlick, who owned lands in Hungary, used his influence on the side of peace. But it required all Cesarini's tact to reconcile the positions of the Pope and the King. He was ready to renew his acquaintance with Æneas, treated him as a friend, and urged him to take the side of Eugenius IV. Æneas was keen-sighted enough to use the opportunity. He saw at Frederick's Court the immense superiority of the diplomacy of the Papal Curia over that of the Council. The strong character of Carvajal, the Papal envoy, produced a deep impression on him.<sup>1</sup> Æneas let it be understood that he was not indisposed to help the side of Eugenius IV. when opportunity offered. He wrote to Carvajal, October, 1440, that he assumed an attitude of judicious expectancy. 'Here stands Æneas in arms, and he shall be my Anchises whom the consent of the universal Church shall choose. So long as Germany, the greater part of the Christian world, still hesitates, I am in doubt; but I am ready to listen to the common judgment, nor in a matter of faith do I trust myself alone.'<sup>2</sup> In December of the same year he had so far advanced in his opinions as to advocate the ending of the schism by any means; he favoured the proposal of the King of France to summon an assembly of princes. It matters not whether it be called a Council; so long as the schism be done away with, the means used may be called by any name. 'Let it be called a conventicle or a meeting; I care not, provided it leads to peace.'<sup>3</sup> He wrote a clever dialogue, the 'Pentalogus,'

<sup>1</sup> In his *Bulla Retractationum* (ed. Helmstadt, p. 155), he gives an account of his arguments with Cesarini. In a letter to D'Allemand in *Oest. Geschichts-Quellen*, xvi., 344, he says: 'Cardinalis Aquilegiensis (the envoy of Felix V.) graviter ægrotat, nec illi tantum vires sunt quantæ Juliano Cardinali; nec tam robustus est Aquilegiensis quam Carvajal'.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Bishop of Chiemsee, *Ep.*, 55.

in which he commended this plan to Frederick III.<sup>1</sup> In May, 1444, he had already begun to consider how the neutrality of Germany could be brought to an end. He wrote to Cesarini: 'The neutrality will be hard to get rid of, because it is useful to many. There are few who seek the truth; almost all seek their own gain. The neutrality is a pleasing snare, because no one can be driven from a benefice, whether he holds it justly or not, and the ordinaries confer benefices as they please. It is a hard matter to rescue the prey from the wolf's mouth. But, as far as I see, all Christendom follows Eugenius; only Germany is divided, and I would gladly see it united, because I attach great weight to this nation, for it is not led by fear, but by its own judgment and goodwill. I shall follow the lead of the King and the Electors.'<sup>2</sup> Soon after this Æneas went to the Diet at Nürnberg, and there saw the feebleness of Frederick III., the divisions among the Electors, and the chances of success which lay open to enterprise. He was appointed by Frederick III. a commissioner, to sit with others nominated by the Electors for the consideration of ecclesiastical affairs. 'We parted in discord and division' is the only result which the letters of Æneas chronicle.

On his way to Nürnberg Æneas passed through Passau, where Schlick was courteously entertained by the bishop. Æneas made himself agreeable to his host, and wrote to a friend in Rome a pleasant sketch of Passau and its bishop. Before sending it he requested the bishop to look it over and correct any inaccuracies which it might contain. This delightful means of letting the bishop know that the pen of Æneas was employed to sing his praises secured its due reward. Æneas was presented before the end of the year to a benefice in Aspach, in Bavaria. The bishop sent him his presentation free from all ecclesiastical or other dues.

<sup>1</sup> In Pez, *Thesaurus*, vol. iv., part 3, p. 736, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.*, 65.



The character of Æneas at this time was not that of a churchman. He had led a careless, adventurous, self-seeking life. He had lived amongst dissolute companions and had been as dissolute as the worst amongst them. He cannot be said to have had any principles; he trusted to nothing but his own cleverness, and his sole object was to make himself comfortable wherever he was. He flattered those who were in authority; he was willing to do anything required of him in hopes of obtaining a suitable reward. He never lost an opportunity of ingratiating himself with any one, and would use any means for that purpose. His store of knowledge, his fluent pen, his subtle mind were at the command of any promising patron. One day he wrote to young Sigismund, Count of the Tyrol, a long and elegant letter in praise of learning, inviting him by numerous examples to fit himself by study for his high position. A little while after, he wrote him a love-letter to help him to overcome the resistance of a girl who shrank from his dishonourable proposals. With characteristic levity and plausibility he even provided the youth with excuses for his conduct. 'I know human nature,' he says; 'he who does not love in youth loves in old age, and makes himself ridiculous. I know too how love kindles in youth dormant virtues; a man strives to do what will please his mistress. Moreover, youths must not be held too tight, but must learn the ways of the world so as to distinguish between good and evil. I send you a letter on condition that you do not neglect literature for love; but as bees gather honey from flowers, so do you from the blandishments of love gather the virtues of Venus.'<sup>1</sup>

The private life of Æneas, as we learn plainly from his letters, was profligate enough; but it does not seem to have shocked men of his time, nor have fallen below the common standard. His irregularities were never made a reproach to him later, nor did he take any pains to hide them from

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 122.

posterity. Such as he was he would have himself known—induced perhaps by literary vanity, more probably by a feeling that his character would not lose in the eyes of his contemporaries by sincerity on his part. In those days chastity was the mark of a saintly character,<sup>1</sup> and Æneas never professed to be a saint. His temperament was ardent, easily moved and soon satisfied. The pleasures of the flesh had strong dominion over him. His love affairs were many, and he did not regard constancy as a virtue. A son was born to him in Scotland after his visit there; but the child soon died. We know of another son, the offspring of an English woman whom Æneas met at Strassburg when on an embassy from Basel. In a letter to his own father he shamelessly describes the pains that he took to overcome her virtue, and asks his father to bring up the child. His excuses for himself show an entire frivolity and absence of principle. ‘You will perhaps call me sinful; but I do not know what opinion you formed of me. Certainly you did not beget a son of stone or iron, seeing you yourself are flesh. I am not a hypocrite who wish to seem good rather than be so. I frankly confess my fault, that I am neither holier than David nor wiser than Solomon. It is an old and ingrained vice, and I do not know who is free from it. But you will say that there are certain limits, which lawful wedlock provides. There are limits to eating and drinking; but who observes them? Who is so upright as not to fall seven times a day? Let the hypocrite profess that he is conscious of no fault. I know no merit in myself, and only divine pity gives me any hope of mercy.’

In truth Æneas took no other view of life than that of a selfish voluptuary, for whom the nobler side of things did not exist. He gave his experiences to his friend Piero da Noceto, who was in the chancery of Eugenius IV., and wrote to him that he had thoughts of marrying his concubine, who had already born him several children. Æneas advises

<sup>1</sup> Vespasiano da Bisticci says of Cesarini with wonder: ‘In prima era firma opinione in corte di Roma, e dov’ egli era stato, lui essere vergine’.

the step: he will know all about his wife beforehand, and will not have to endure the disillusionment that often follows a honeymoon. 'I have loved many women,' he says, 'and after winning them have grown weary of them; if I were to marry I would not unite myself to any one whose habits I did not know beforehand.'<sup>1</sup> Æneas was the confidant of the amours of Kaspar Schlick, and took an adventure of Schlick's with a Sienese lady as the subject for a novel in the style of Boccaccio. This story, 'Lucretia and Euryalus,' had great popularity and was translated into almost every European tongue.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the life of Æneas at Vienna was by no means edifying, nor was it satisfactory to himself. His associates in the Imperial Chancery were mostly younger than himself. Their manners were rude, their enjoyments coarse, and their vices wanting in that refinement which to a cultivated Italian gave them half their pleasure. Æneas was never at home in Germany: he could not speak the language fluently: the country, the climate, the people, and the manners were all distasteful to him. He pined at times to return to Italy, and urged his friends to deliver him from his exile in a foreign land. He began to feel that his life was somewhat wasted; he began to think that he ought to turn over a new leaf and enter upon a new career. He thought of taking holy orders; but if his cultivation did not keep him from vice, it at least prevented him from assuming a position the duties of which he could not with decency fulfil. 'I do not intend to spend all my life outside Italy,' he writes in February, 1444. 'As yet I have taken care not to involve myself in holy orders. I fear about my continency, which, though a laudable virtue, is more easily practised in word than in deed, and befits philosophers better than poets.'<sup>3</sup>

Dissatisfaction of Æneas with Germany.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 45, of January, 1444.

<sup>2</sup> It is in the letters of Æneas, No. 114, and was written in July, 1444.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, 50.

While this was the frame of Æneas's mind, the proceedings of the Diet of Nürnberg gave a new direction to his energies. The Diet did nothing except confirm the current witticism that 'diets were indeed pregnant, for each carried another in its womb'. It revealed, however, to Æneas the existence of the strong party among the Electors, which had formed a league in favour of Felix V. He saw that the contest between the two Popes was becoming important in German politics. It gave the Electors an opportunity of acting without the King, and if their league in favour of Felix succeeded, the royal power would have received a serious, if not a deadly blow. The weakness of the Electors lay in the fact that their ecclesiastical policy was not sincere. They did not venture to identify themselves with the national desire for reform, and, supported by the authority of the Council of Basel, set in order the affairs of the German Church. Their policy was oligarchical, not popular; they wished to strengthen their own hands against the King, not to work for what the nation desired. They looked for help, not to the national sentiment of Germany, but to the French King, and negotiated with him to support them in the old plan of demanding a new Council in a new place. But the French had just shown themselves to be the national enemies of Germany; and Charles VII., now freed from the pressure of the English war, was no longer willing to help the Electors, but reverted to the old desire of France to have a Pope at Avignon. The negotiations between him and the Electors led to no results.<sup>1</sup>

This policy of the Electors naturally tended to bring the King and the Pope together. Frederick III. on his part had from the beginning inclined in favour of Eugenius IV., and events had made the friendship of Eugenius more desirable. Eugenius had so far wished to fulfil his promises to the Greeks that he pro-

Policy of  
the  
German  
Electors.  
1444.

Battle of  
Varna.  
November,  
1444.

<sup>1</sup> Pückert, *Die Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, 212, etc.

claimed a crusade against the Turks, and sent Cesarini as his legate into Hungary. Cesarini, whose lofty character was never displayed to better advantage than when acting as the leader of a forlorn hope, stirred the courage of the Hungarians, filled them with enthusiasm for the cause of Christendom against the infidel, and awakened a strong feeling of devotion towards Eugenius IV. In 1443 Wladislaf, the Hungarian King, compelled the Turks to sue for peace on condition of restoring Serbia and quitting the Hungarian frontier. But next year the expectations of a combined attack upon the Turks by Venice and the Greeks led Cesarini to urge Hungary again to war. The peace had not been approved by the Pope, and he absolved them from all obligations to observe it. His exhortations were obeyed, and Wladislaf again led forth his army to join his allies on the Hellespont. But at Varna he was startled by the news that the Turkish Sultan Murad was advancing with 60,000 men against his army of 20,000. Cesarini counselled a prudent policy of defence; but Wladislaf was resolved to try the issue of a battle. On the fatal field of Varna, November 10, 1444, the Christian army suffered a severe defeat, and Wladislaf fell fighting.<sup>1</sup> The eventful life of Cesarini found on the battle-field a noble end.<sup>2</sup> Chivalrous and high-minded, he had always devoted himself unsparingly to the loftiest and most difficult cause that was before him. He failed in war against the Bohemians; he failed to regulate the ecclesiastical violence of the Council of Basel; he failed to drive the Turks from Europe. Yet

<sup>1</sup> See Bonfinius, *Decades*, iii., ch. iv., v.; von Hammer, xi.; Dlugloss, xii.; the letter of Æneas to Duke of Milan giving the news, dated Dec. 13, 1444, *Epist.*, No. 52.

<sup>2</sup> About the mode of Cesarini's death there were various accounts which are epitomised by Æneas Sylvius, *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 119: 'Julianus quoque Cardinalis in eo bello periit, de quo variam famam referunt, alii inter præliandum occisum, alii bello vulneratum effugisse, atque ex vulnere periisse; constantior tamen fama est ipsum, dum fugeret, equumque potaret, ab Hungaris, qui et ipsi fugiebant, percutsum, illustrem spiritum qui multis annis Basiliensem conventum rexerat, emisisse'.

his efforts were always directed to a noble end, and the very singleness of his own purpose made him neglect the prudence which would have been familiar to a smaller man. Amid the self-seeking of the age Cesarini rises almost to the proportions of a hero; he is the only man whose character claims our entire respect and admiration.

The news of the defeat of Varna filled Europe with consternation; but it was not without its advantages to Frederick III. The death of Wladislaf opened the way for the settlement of Hungarian affairs, and the recognition of Frederick's ward, Ladislas.

Frederick  
III. draws  
nearer to  
Eugenius  
IV. 1444.

To gain this end more securely, Frederick needed the help of Eugenius IV. Negotiations began to take a more intimate and personal turn in relation to the affairs of Hungary. Yet still the affairs of the Church were the subject of formal embassies, in which the old plan of a new Council was ostensibly being pursued. In November, 1444, the Fathers of Basel answered this proposal by an entire refusal. They had already agreed to it in 1442, and the obstinacy of Eugenius IV. had prevented it; on him rested the blame of its failure. An envoy had next to be sent to bear a similar proposition to Eugenius IV. This was not done till the beginning of 1445, and then the person chosen was Æneas Sylvius.

Embassy  
of Æneas  
Sylvius to  
the Pope.  
1445.

Æneas at once saw that in dealings between Frederick III. and Eugenius IV. there was scope for his cleverness and his powers of intrigue. He readily started on his journey, and rejoiced to see his native land once more. At Siena his kinsfolk were alarmed at his audacity in venturing into the presence of the Pope, whom he had so often attacked and so grievously offended. They represented to him that 'Eugenius was cruel, mindful of wrongs, restrained by no conscience, no feeling of pity; he was surrounded by ministers of crime; Æneas, if he went to Rome, would never return'.<sup>1</sup> Æneas,

<sup>1</sup> *Comm.*, ed. Fea, p. 87.



no doubt, enjoyed the simplicity of these good people, and acted with dignity the part of a possible martyr to duty. He tore himself from their weeping embrace, declaring that he must either fulfil his embassy or die in the attempt,<sup>1</sup> and proceeded to Rome. Carvajal had already given Eugenius information of the usefulness of Æneas. He was well received by several of the Cardinals for his literary or for his political merits. Amongst the officials of the Papal Curia he met several of his old friends at Basel. Before he could have an audience with the Pope it was necessary that he should be absolved from the ecclesiastical censure pronounced against the adherents of the Council. This duty was assigned to the Cardinals Landriano and Le Jeune, who afterwards introduced Æneas to the Pope's presence. Eugenius graciously allowed him to kiss not only his foot, but his hand and his cheek. Æneas presented his credentials, and then began to speak as a penitent on his own behalf.

‘ Holy Father, before I discharge my errand for the King, I will say a little about myself. I know that you have heard much against me ; and those who have told you have spoken truly. At Basel I spoke, wrote, and did many things, I do not deny it, not with the intent of injuring you, but of benefiting the Church. I erred, but in the company of many others, men of high repute. I followed Cardinal Cesarini, the Archbishop of Palermo, the apostolic notary Pontano, men who were esteemed in the eyes of the law and teachers of the truth. I will not mention the universities which gave their opinions against you. In such company who would not have erred ? But when I discovered the error of the Basilians, I confess that I did not at once flee to you. I was afraid lest I should fall from one error into another. I went to the neutral camp, that after mature deliberation I might shape my course. I remained three years with the German king, and

Recon-  
ciliation of  
Æneas  
with  
Eugenius  
IV.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comm.*, p. 90.

there my study of the disputes between your legates and those of the Council left me no doubt that the right was on your side. Hence, when this embassy was offered me, I willingly accepted it, thinking that so I might regain your favour. Now I am in your presence, and ask your pardon because I erred in ignorance.'

Eugenius answered graciously: 'We know that you erred with many; but to one who owns his fault we cannot refuse pardon, for the Church is a loving mother. Now that you hold the truth, see that you never let it go, and by good works seek the divine grace. You live in a place where you may defend the truth and benefit the Church. We, forgetting your former injuries, will love you well if you walk well.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus Æneas made his peace, and entered into a tacit agreement with the Pope that if he proved himself useful his services should be rewarded. Eugenius had gained an agent in Germany on whose devotion he might rely, because it was closely bound up with self-interest. The diplomacy of the Curia had again shown its astuteness.

After this reconciliation Æneas was regarded as a person of some importance at Rome, and was well received by several of the Cardinals. But there was one person who was too blunt to disguise his contempt for this self-interested conversion. One day Æneas met Tommaso Parentucelli, who had been a companion in the service of Cardinal Albergata, but who had followed his master and had been an uncompromising opponent of the Council. He was now Bishop of Bologna, and was respected for his character and his learning. Æneas advanced to greet him with outstretched hand, but Parentucelli coldly turned away. Æneas was piqued, and afterwards adopted a similar attitude of disdain towards Parentucelli. 'How ignorant are we of the future!' he remarks afterwards, when relating this incident; 'if Æneas had known that

Æneas  
Sylvius in  
Rome.  
1445.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Commentarii*, p. 10.

Parentucelli would be Pope, he would have condoned all things.<sup>1</sup> A reconciliation between the two was brought about by friends before Æneas left Rome; but Parentucelli was never cordial to one whose sincerity he doubted.

On the particular matter of his embassy Æneas does not seem to have done much. The party of Eugenius in Germany, headed by Schlick, saw no way of ending the neutrality except by summoning another Council. To this Eugenius was resolved not to consent, and Æneas gave him the benefit of his advice. In April he left Rome with an announcement that Eugenius would send an embassy to bring his answer to the King. His envoys, Carvajal and Parentucelli, followed close upon Æneas.

Eugenius IV. had already entered upon a policy of attacking his enemies in Germany. On January 16, 1445, he issued a Bull cutting off the lands of the Duke of Cleves from the dioceses of Köln and Münster. In this matter he acted at the request of the Dukes of Burgundy and Cleves; but in the Bull he spoke of the Archbishop of Köln as disobedient to the Roman See, and called the Bishop of Münster, 'Henry, the son of wickedness, who styles himself Bishop of Münster'. The Electors had not fared so well as they hoped in their negotiations with France. They were afraid lest the King might get the better of them by his secret dealings with Eugenius IV., and were taken aback at this hostile display on the part of Eugenius. They judged it prudent to retire from their separate position, and once more make common cause with the King. At the Diet on June 24, 1445, the neutrality of Germany was renewed for eight months, at the end of which time the King was to summon an 'assembly of the German Church or a national Council,' which was to be proclaimed to the various lands depending on the Empire, including England, Scotland and Denmark.<sup>2</sup> Once more

Eugenius  
IV.  
attacks  
the Elec-  
tors. Janu-  
ary, 1445.

<sup>1</sup> *Comment.*, ed. Fea, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> See Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, Anhang, vol. vi., p. 8, and Pückert, *Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, 238.

the ecclesiastical question was to be also a national question for Germany. The Electors were willing to abandon their separate negotiations with Felix V. on the understanding that Frederick III. abandoned his agreement with Eugenius IV.

But Frederick III., indolent and careless as he was, saw in an alliance with Eugenius IV. the sole means of maintaining himself against the formidable alliance, which threatened him, of France with the House of Savoy and the German princes. If he was heedless himself, the envoys of Eugenius IV. spared no pains to enlighten him. Schlick and Æneas Sylvius were ever at his side, and Carvajal was busy at Vienna arranging an alliance between the King and the Pope. 'The King hates the neutrality,' writes Æneas Sylvius at the end of August, 'and would willingly abandon it if the princes would only concur, to which end perhaps some means may be found.'<sup>1</sup> In Rome Eugenius IV. went on with his proceedings against the Archbishop of Köln. It was known in Vienna that the archbishop had been summoned to appear in Rome,<sup>2</sup> and it was clear that further steps must follow; yet the King raised no word of protest. He was engaged in a secret treaty with the Pope; he was selling his neutrality, and was being bought cheap. On September 13 Carvajal left Vienna to carry to Rome Frederick III.'s conditions. The terms which Carvajal had negotiated were accepted by Eugenius IV. A treaty between Pope and King was once more firmly established, and the end of the reform movement in Germany was rapidly approaching.

The terms on which Frederick III. sold his aid to Eugenius IV. are expressed in three Bulls issued in February, 1446.<sup>3</sup> The Pope granted to the King the right during his lifetime to nominate to the six great bishoprics of Trent, Brixen, Chur, Gurk, Trieste,

Negotiations between Eugenius IV. and Frederick III. 1445.

Terms of the treaty between Pope and King. February, 1446.

<sup>1</sup> Voigt, in *Archiv für Oesterr. Geschichts-Quellen*, xvi., 373.

<sup>2</sup> See letter of Æn. Sylvius, dated September 13, carried by Carvajal to Rome, in Voigt, *Archiv*, xvi., 386.

<sup>3</sup> The Bulls are given in Chmel, *Materialien*, i., No. 72-74.

and Piben; he granted the King and his successors the right to nominate for the Papal approval those who should have visitorial powers over the monasteries of Austria; the King should have the right of presentation to 100 small benefices in Austria. Besides this, the Papacy was also to pay the King the sum of 221,000 ducats, of which 121,000 were to be paid by Eugenius and the rest by his successors.<sup>1</sup> The indolent and short-sighted Frederick, no doubt, thought that he had made a good bargain. He obtained a supply of money, of which he was always in need. He got into his own hands the chief bishoprics in his ancestral domains, and thereby greatly strengthened his power over Austria. By the nomination of visitors of the monasteries he lessened the influence of his enemy, the Archbishop of Salzburg, by exempting the monasteries from his jurisdiction. By the right of presentation to 100 benefices he secured the means of rewarding the hungry officials of his court. He thought only of his own personal interests; he cared only to secure his own position in his ancestral domains. For the rights of the Church, for his position in the Empire, he had no thought. All that can be urged in Frederick's behalf is, that the German princes were equally ready to abandon the German Church and make terms with either Pope who would help them to secure their own political power. On the other hand, Eugenius IV., though making great concessions, was careful not to impair the rights of the Papacy or take any irretrievable step. The Papal treasury was exhausted; but money was well spent in regaining the adhesion of Germany, and Eugenius IV. felt amply justified in mortgaging for this purpose the revenues of his successors. The Pope granted the nomination to six bishoprics, but only for Frederick's lifetime, after which the mischief, if any, might be repaired. The absolute appointment of visitors of monasteries was not granted to Frederick and his successors in Austria, but only the nomination of

<sup>1</sup> This rests on the authority of Heimburg in a letter of 1446 given by Dux, *Nicolas von Cusa*, i., Beilage iv.

several from whom the Pope was to select. The benefices granted to the King were not important ones; they were to be between the annual value of sixty and forty marks, and did not include appointments to cathedral and collegiate churches. There was nothing in all this that materially affected the Papal position in Germany.

Moreover, Eugenius IV. was anxious that the treaty between himself and Frederick III. should be as soon as possible openly acknowledged. He promised Frederick 100,000 guilders for the expenses of his coronation. He invited him to Rome to receive the Imperial crown; in case Frederick could not come to Rome, Eugenius, old and gouty as he was, undertook to meet him at Bologna, Padua or Treviso. In the reunion of the Papacy and the Empire Eugenius IV. saw the final overthrow of the Council of Basel and the restoration of the Papal monarchy.

Eugenius IV., however, did not trust only to his allurements to induce the indolent Frederick to declare himself. Knowing the feeble character of the King, he resolved to play a bold game, so as to attain his end more speedily. He had already succeeded in weakening, by his threat of ecclesiastical censures, the electoral league in favour of Felix V. As his negotiations with Frederick III. advanced, he resolved to strike a decided blow against his enemies in Germany. On February 9 he issued a Bull deposing from their sees the Archbishops of Köln and Trier, and appointing in their places Adolf of Cleves and John, Bishop of Cambrai, the nephew and the natural brother of his powerful ally, the Duke of Burgundy. The German rebels were openly defied, and the allies of Eugenius IV. must range themselves decidedly on his side.

If Eugenius IV. acted boldly, the Electors answered the challenge with no less promptitude. On March 21 they met at Frankfort, and formed a league for mutual defence. The attack upon the electoral privileges combined the whole body in opposition to the high-handed procedure of the Pope. Undeterred by the

Eugenius IV. deposes the Electors of Trier and Köln. February, 1446.

League of the Electors. 1446.



alliance of Pope and King, the Electors united to assert the principles on which the neutrality of Germany had been founded. If the time had come when neutrality could no longer be maintained, it should, at least, be laid aside on the same grounds as those on which it had been asserted. The Electors again assumed the position of mediators between the rival Popes, but set forward a plan of mediation which should lead to decided results, and which should have for its object the security of the liberty of the German Church. They abandoned their scheme for the recognition of Felix V., and were willing to join with the King in recognising Eugenius IV., but on condition that he confirmed the decrees of Constance about the authority of General Councils, accepted the reforming decrees of Basel as they were expressed in the declaration of neutrality, recalled all censures pronounced against neutrals, and agreed to assemble a Council on May 1, 1447, at Constance, Worms, Mainz, or Trier. They prepared Bulls for the Papal signature embodying these conditions: on the issue of these Bulls they were ready to restore their obedience and submit the formal settlement of Christendom to the future Council.

The attitude of the Electors was at once dignified and statesmanlike. It showed that the Bishops of Trier and Köln possessed political capacity hitherto unsuspected. No special mention was made of individual grievances, no direct answer was given to the attack made by Eugenius IV. on the electoral privileges. By accepting their terms the Pope would tacitly recall his Bulls of deposition; if he refused to accept them, the Electors would be free to turn to Felix V. and the fathers of Basel. They might summon in name a new Council; but it would consist of the members of the Council of Basel reinforced by Germans bound to the policy of the Electors. They resolved that envoys be sent to Frederick III. and Eugenius IV., and unless a satisfactory answer were obtained by September, they would proceed further. These resolutions were the work, in the first instance, of the four Rhenish Electors; but within a month

the Markgraf of Brandenburg and the Duke of Saxony had also given in their adhesion. The League of the Electoral Oligarchy, to act in despite of its nominal head, was now fully formed.

Strong as was the position of the Electors, they showed their weakness by not asserting it publicly. Their agreement was kept secret; and the embassy sent to demand the adhesion of Frederick III. was instructed to lay the plan only before him and six counsellors, who were to be bound by an oath of secrecy. Decided as was the policy of the Electors in appearance, it was founded upon no large sentiment of earnestness or patriotism. It was merely a diplomatic semblance, and, as such, must be cloaked in diplomatic secrecy, that it might be exchanged, should expediency require, for a more conciliatory attitude. The envoys of the Electors were headed by Gregory Heimburg, who hoped against hope that he might use the opportunity of giving effect to his own reforming ideas, and trusted that he might work through the selfishness of the Electors towards a really national end. Frederick III. received through him the proposals of the Electors, by which he was sorely embarrassed. At his Court were Carvajal and the Bishop of Bologna, who had just brought him the Bulls which ratified his treaty with the Pope; but his oath of secrecy to the Electors forbade him to take counsel with them. The separate articles of the proposals of the Electors were discussed in the presence of the six counsellors sworn to secrecy. The King was ready to accept them in principle, but made reservations on points of detail. The envoys were instructed not to lay before the King the Bulls which they were to present to the Pope, unless he fully accepted the provisions of the Electors. Frederick, on his side, complained of this reserve as offensive to his dignity. 'It is a new thing,' he said, 'that an agreement should be made behind my back, and that I should be required to accept it without a full discussion of every article.' The ambassadors of the Electors declared that

The pro-  
posals  
of the  
Electors  
laid before  
Frederick  
III. 1446.

they had submitted everything to the King. But Frederick III. was justified in refusing to join the Electors till they had shown him the written proposals which they were to submit to the Pope: and they refused to do this because they wished to keep in the background their final threat of making common cause with the Council of Basel.<sup>1</sup> The sole result of these negotiations was that the King proclaimed a Diet at Frankfort on September 1, and let it be understood that he was then prepared to consider the termination of the neutrality.

In the beginning of July Heimburg and two companions reached Rome. Frederick III., anxious to give some hint to Eugenius IV., told the Pope's envoys at Vienna that it would be well if one of them returned to Rome. Carvajal was ill of a fever; so the Bishop of Bologna set out, and with him went Æneas Sylvius, to whom the King confided the secret of the Electors. Æneas pleads, as a technical excuse for this double dealing, that the King himself had taken no oath of secrecy,<sup>2</sup> but only his six counsellors. It is, however, probable that Æneas needed no special enlightenment, but as secretary was privy to the whole matter, and was himself bound to secrecy,<sup>3</sup> if not specially on that occasion, yet by the nature of his office. However that may be, he went with Thomas of Bologna, and on the way let drop enough to indicate to Thomas the advice which he ought to give to the Pope. They made such haste on their journey that the ambassadors of the Electors only entered Rome the day before them, and Thomas of Bologna was the first to have an audience of the Pope. Æneas expressly says, 'The Bishop of Bologna, though he could not know all that the ambassadors of the Electors brought with them, still guessed and opined much'.<sup>4</sup>

Envoys  
of the  
Electors  
in Rome.  
July, 1446.

<sup>1</sup> For these negotiations see Pückert, *Die Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, p. 264, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Comm.*, ed. Fea, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> This is the conjecture of Pückert, p. 264.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. Frederici*, in Kollar, ii., p. 122.

‘Instructed by Æneas, he warned the Pope about the matter, and advised him to give the ambassadors a mild answer.’<sup>1</sup> The duplicity of Æneas was invaluable to the cause of Eugenius IV.: it averted the most pressing danger, that the Pope, by his contemptuous behaviour, should give the Electors an immediate pretext for turning to the Council of Basel.

The presence of Æneas was also useful in another way. Frederick III. had not been asked by the Electors to send an embassy to Rome; but Æneas was there to speak in the King’s name, and was called in to assist at the audience. By this means Eugenius IV. had a pretext for overlooking the fact that what were submitted to him were the demands of the Electors; he could treat them as the joint representations of the King and the Electors, and so return a vague answer. Every precaution had been taken by the Electors to put their cause clearly before the Pope. When Eugenius raised an objection to receiving an embassy from the men whom he had deposed, he was informed that the credentials of the ambassadors were signed simply with the subscription of the whole College—‘The Electoral Princes of the Holy Roman Empire’.

However definitely the Electors put their propositions before the Pope, he was resolved not to give them a definite answer. When they were admitted to an audience, Æneas spoke first on behalf of the King. He recommended the ambassadors to the Pope’s kindly attention, and vaguely said that the peace of the Church might be promoted by entertaining their proposals. Then Heimburg, in a clear, incisive, and dignified speech, set forward the objects of the Electors. There could not be a greater contrast than between Æneas and Heimburg; they may almost be taken as representatives of the German and Italian character. Heimburg was tall and of commanding presence, with flashing eyes and a genial face, honest, straightforward, eminently

<sup>1</sup> *Comm.*, ed. Fea, 91.

national in his views and policy, holding steadfastly by the object which he had in view.<sup>1</sup> He was the very opposite of the shifty Italian adventurer, who recognised in him a natural foe. Heimburg's speech was respectful, but uncompromising. Eugenius listened, and then, after a pause, shrewdly returned a vague answer. The deposition of the archbishops, he said, had been decreed for weighty reasons; as to the authority of General Councils, he had never refused to acknowledge it, but had only defended the dignity of the Apostolic See; as to the German Church, he did not wish to oppress it, but to act for its welfare. The proposals made to him were serious, and he must take time to consider them.

Æneas meanwhile unfolded to Eugenius the opinions of Frederick III. He advised that the archbishops should be restored, without, however, annulling their deprivation; that the Constance decree in favour of General Councils should be accepted. If this were done, the recognition of Eugenius might be accomplished; if not, there was great danger of a schism. Eugenius listened and seemed to assent. The Cardinals endeavoured to discover if the ambassadors had any further instructions; but Heimburg did not consider himself justified by the Pope's attitude to lay before him the Bulls that he had brought. The ambassadors were kept for three weeks awaiting the Pope's answer, and Æneas has drawn a spiteful picture of Heimburg sweltering in the summer heat, stalking indignantly on Monte Giordano in the evening with bare head and breast, denouncing the wickedness of Eugenius and the Curia. At length they were told that, as they had no powers to treat further, the Pope would send envoys with his answer to the Diet at Frankfort. The ambassadors left Rome without producing their Bulls. Heimburg regarded the Papal attitude as equivalent to a refusal to entertain his proposals. Meanwhile ambassadors had been sent also to Basel, and the Council had similarly deferred its answer till the assembling of the Diet.

<sup>1</sup> See Æneas's description of him, *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., p. 123.



The results of the Diet of Frankfort would clearly be of great importance both to Germany and to the Church at large. The policy of the Electors had not received the adhesion of the King; the oligarchy had resolved to act in opposition to their head, and, if they were resolute, the deposition of Frederick III. was imminent. In this emergency Frederick entrusted his interests to the care of the Markgraf Albert of Brandenburg and Jacob of Baden, the Bishops of Augsburg and Chiemsee, Kaspar Schlick and Æneas Sylvius. At the head of this embassy stood Albert of Brandenburg, who had already shown his devotion to Frederick by taking the field against the Armagnacs, and who was bent upon overthrowing the intrigues of France with the Rhenish Electors. The representatives of the King were all convinced of the great importance of the crisis, and were not a little embarrassed to find at Frankfort no ambassadors of the Pope. The Bishop of Bologna had left Rome with Æneas Sylvius, but had been delayed at Parma by sickness, and on his recovery had gone to confer with the Duke of Burgundy about the measures to be adopted towards the deposed Archbishops of Trier and Köln. John of Carvajal and Nicolas of Cusa had come from Vienna; but they had no special instructions about the answer to be returned by the Pope to the proposals of the Electors.

In spite of the gravity of the occasion, few of the German princes or prelates were personally present at Frankfort. The four Rhenish Electors were there; but the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony only sent representatives, as did also the majority of the bishops and nobles. From Basel came the Cardinal of Arles, bearing a decree which approved of the transference of the Council to one of the places which might be approved by the King and the Electors, and generally accepting the proposals of the Electors without making any mention of Felix V. The Electors took up a position of friendliness to the Cardinal of Arles. When, on September 14, the proceedings of the

Partisans  
of Frederick  
III.

Diet of  
Frankfort.  
September  
1, 1446.



Diet began with a solemn mass, the Cardinal appeared, as was his wont, in state as a Papal legate. The royal ambassadors made the usual protest that Germany was neutral and could not recognise the officials of either Pope. The Archbishop of Trier angrily denounced their conduct; they could admit the legates of Eugenius, the foes of the nation, and would exclude those of the Council. The majority agreed with him; but the citizens of Frankfort were still loyal, and their tumultuous interference compelled the Cardinal to lay aside the insignia of his office.

The proceedings<sup>1</sup> began with the reading by Heimbург of the speech which he had made to Eugenius IV., and the written answer of the Pope. Heimbург further gave an account of his embassy, and the reasons which had led him to abstain from presenting to the Pope the Bulls which the Electors had drawn up; the question to be discussed was, whether the Pope's answer gave ground for further deliberation. On the Pope's side his envoys submitted an answer to the 'prayers of the King and the Electors'. Eugenius was ready to summon a Council within a convenient time; he had never opposed the decrees of the Council of Constance, which had been renewed in Basel while a universal and recognised Council was sitting; he was willing to do away with the old burdens of the German Church provided he were indemnified for the losses which he would thereby sustain. About the revocation of the deprivation of the archbishops he said nothing. The answer of Eugenius IV. was mere mockery of his opponents. He granted nothing that they had asked; his concessions were merely apparent, and he reserved to himself full power to make them illusory. His attitude towards the Electors was practically the same as it had been towards the Council of Basel.

<sup>1</sup> For the proceedings of the Diet the account given by Æneas Sylvius, *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 127, etc., must be compared with the official record in the Dresden Archives excerpted by Pückert, *Die Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, p. 278, etc.

Division amongst the Electors. The regal and the Papal ambassadors would not have ventured to submit such an answer if they had not seen their way to effect a breach in the ranks of their opponents. On September 22 Albert of Brandenburg succeeded in inducing the representatives of his brother the Elector, the Archbishop of Mainz, two bishops, and one or two nobles, to agree that they had obtained an answer from the Pope, which afforded the basis for peace in the Church, and that they would stand by one another to maintain this opinion. The Archbishop of Mainz was won over by consideration of the assistance which he might obtain from Frederick III. and Albert of Brandenburg in the affairs of his own dominions. Æneas Sylvius is not ashamed to own that he was the instrument of bribing four of the archbishop's counsellors with 2000 florins to help in bringing him to this decision. The adhesion of Frederick of Brandenburg was due to the influence of his brother Albert. The others who joined in the step had all some personal interest to serve.

Round the basis thus secured adherents rapidly began to gather. But it was clear to the Papal envoys that they must make some concessions, and afford their new adherents a plausible pretext for withdrawing their support from the Electoral League. Æneas Sylvius undertook the responsibility of playing a dubious part. He 'squeezed the venom,' as he puts it, out of the proposals of the Electors, and composed a document in which the Pope undertook, if the princes of Europe agreed, to summon a General Council within ten months of the surrender of the neutrality, recognised the Constance decrees, confirmed the reforming decrees of Basel till the future Council decided otherwise, and, at the instance of the King, restored the deposed Archbishops of Trier and Köln, on condition that they returned to his obedience.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop of Bologna and Nicolas of Cusa

<sup>1</sup> The Dresden MS. has in the margin of this proposal the note: 'Nota fallaciam, quum potius rex instare deberet ut ante omnem tractatum domini isti restituerentur,' Pückert, 289.

assented to these proposals; John of Carvajal was dubious, and hot words passed between him and Æneas, who was afraid lest his obstinacy or honesty might spoil all. Æneas skilfully mixed up his relations with the Pope and with the King, and managed to produce an impression that the Pope had commissioned him to make this offer. The sturdy Germans, Heimburg and Lysura, were annoyed at this activity of the renegade Italian in their national business. 'Do you come from Siena,' said Lysura to Æneas, 'to give laws to Germany?' Æneas thought it wiser to return no answer.

Æneas may have exaggerated his own share in this matter; but early in October the Royal and Papal ambassadors agreed to submit to the Diet a project of sending a new embassy to Rome, to negotiate with Eugenius IV. on this basis. Their demands were to go in the form of articles, not, as before, of Bulls ready prepared.

This seemed to the majority to be a salutary compromise. The Electors of Mainz and Brandenburg considered it better than a breach with the King. The Elector of Saxony and the Pfalzgraf thought that the new proposals contained all that was important in the old. The summons of a new Council would keep matters still open; anyhow, negotiations would gain time. On October 5 the league that had been formed in favour of this compromise was openly avowed, and received many adherents. It was resolved that the articles be presented to Eugenius at Christmas; if he accept them, the neutrality should be ended; if not, the matter should be again considered. The answer was to be brought to a Diet at Nürnberg on March 19, 1447. The Archbishops of Trier and Köln found themselves deserted by the other Electors; all they could do was to join on October 11 in a final decree that the King should try to obtain from the Pope a confirmation of the Bulls prepared by the Electors; failing that, he should obtain Bulls framed according to the articles; these were to be laid before the Electors at the next Diet,

Over-  
throw of  
the Elec-  
toral  
League.  
October,  
1446.

and each should be free to accept or reject them. This reservation of their individual liberty was the utmost that the oligarchical leaders now hoped to obtain for themselves. Next day the Cardinal of Arles appeared before the Electors in behalf of the Council of Basel, which had been invited to support the policy of the Electors, and had issued Bulls accordingly. He proffered the Bulls, but no one would receive them. With heavy hearts the envoys of Basel left Frankfort. On their way to Basel they were attacked and plundered; only by the speed of his horse did the Cardinal of Arles succeed in taking refuge in Strassburg. He afterwards said in Basel, 'Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver, but Eugenius has offered sixty thousand for me'.

The league of the Electors had been overthrown at Frankfort, and with it also fell the cause of the Council of Basel. Germany was the Council's last hope, and Germany had failed. The diplomacy of the Curia had helped Frederick III. to overcome the oligarchical rising in Germany; but the Pope had won more than the King. The oligarchy might find new grounds on which to assert its privileges against the royal power; the conciliar movement was abandoned, and the summoning of another Council was vaguely left to the Pope's good pleasure. The ecclesiastical reforms, which had been made by the Council of Basel, survived merely as a basis of further negotiations with the Pope. If the Papal diplomacy had withstood the full force of the conciliar movement, it was not likely that the last ebb of the falling tide would prevail against it.

There still remained, however, for the final settlement of the question, the assent of Eugenius IV. to the undertaking of his ambassadors. Even at Frankfort, Carvajal had been opposed to all concessions; at Rome, where the gravity of the situation in Germany and the importance of the victory won at Frankfort were not fully appreciated, there was still a chance that the Pope's obstinacy might be the beginning of new

Over-  
throw  
of the  
Council  
of Basel.

Proposals  
of the  
Diet laid  
before  
Eugenius  
IV. No-  
vember,  
1446.

difficulties. But the health of Eugenius IV. was failing; he was weary of the long struggle, and desired before the end of his days to see peace restored to the distracted Church. The theologians in the Curia, headed by John of Torquemada, counselled no concession; the politicians were in favour of accepting the proffered terms. Eugenius showed his desire to increase the influence of those who were conversant with German affairs by raising to the Cardinalate in December Carvajal and the Bishop of Bologna. Frederick III., the Electors, and the princes of Germany all sent their envoys to Rome. On behalf of the King went Æneas Sylvius and a Bohemian knight, Procopius of Rabstein; chief amongst the others was John of Lysura, Vicar of the Archbishop of Mainz. They all met at Siena, and rode into Rome, sixty horsemen. A mile outside the city they were welcomed by the inferior clergy, and were honourably conducted to their lodgings. A difficulty was first raised whether the Pope could receive the ambassadors of the Archbishops of Bremen and Magdeburg, seeing that those prelates had been confirmed by the Council of Basel; but this was overcome by a suggestion of Carvajal that they should appear as representatives of the sees, not of their present occupants. On the third day after their arrival an audience was given to the German ambassadors in a secret consistory, where Eugenius was seated with fifteen Cardinals. In a clever speech Æneas Sylvius laid the proposals before the Pope, and such was his plausibility that he managed to satisfy the Germans without offending the dignity of the Pope.<sup>1</sup> He touched upon the evils of ecclesiastical dissension, spoke of the importance of Germany and its desire for peace, skilfully introduced the German proposals, and besought the Pope of his clemency to grant them as the means of unity. Eugenius answered by condemning the neutrality, complained of the conduct of the deposed archbishops, and finally said that he must deliberate.

<sup>1</sup> In Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, i., 108.

On the same day Eugenius was seized by an attack of fever, which confined him to his bed. The German question was referred to a commission of Cardinals, and opinion was greatly divided. Only nine Cardinals were in favour of concession; the others declared that the Roman See was being sold to the Germans, and that they were being dragged by the nose like buffaloes. The German proposals were not treated as though they were meant for definite acceptance, but were regarded as the basis of further negotiation. The ambassadors were entertained and cajoled by the Cardinals, while the illness of Eugenius IV. made every one anxious to have the matter settled speedily. Little by little the articles agreed on at Frankfort were pared down: (1) As regarded the summons of a new Council, the Pope agreed to it as a favour, without issuing a Bull, which might bind his successor, but merely making a personal promise to the King and the Electors.<sup>1</sup> (2) Instead of the acceptance of the decrees of Constance and Basel, Eugenius agreed to recognise 'the Council of Constance, and its decree *Frequens* and other of its decrees, and all the other Councils representing the Catholic Church'. All mention of the Council of Basel was studiously avoided, and, by the express mention of the decree *Frequens*, the omission of the more important decree *Sacrosancta* was in a measure emphasised. (3) On the third point, the acceptance of the Pragmatic Sanction of Germany as it had been established at the declaration of the neutrality in 1439, Eugenius IV. was willing to follow the example of Martin V. in granting the concordats of Constance. He recognised the existing possessors of benefices, and agreed to send a legate to Germany, who would arrange for the liberties of the German Church in the future, and the proper provision to be made for the Papacy in return. Meanwhile, the condition of the German Church was to remain as it was, 'till an agreement had been made by our legate, or other orders

Negotiations with the Curia.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, *Annales*, 1447, No. 5.



given by a Council'. The Germans, who had at first taken the Basel decrees as the foundation of an ecclesiastical reformation, now accepted them as a limit—a limit, moreover, which might be narrowed. (4) In like manner the Papal diplomacy secured for the Pope a triumph in the matter of the deposed archbishops. Eugenius IV. was asked to annul their deposition, if they were willing to concur in the declaration in his favour; he agreed, when they did so concur, to restore them to their office.

Moreover, to aid the progress of these negotiations, Æneas Sylvius undertook, in Frederick's name, that the King would solemnly declare, and publish throughout Germany, his recognition of Eugenius, would receive with due honour a Papal legate, would order the city of Basel to withdraw its safe-conduct from the Council, and, as regarded the provision to be made for the Pope out of the ecclesiastical revenues of Germany, would act not only as a mediator but as an ally of the Pope.

Thus diplomacy was busily spinning its web round the bed of the dying Pope. True till the last to his persistent character, Eugenius IV. was resolved to see the restoration of the German obedience before he died. The theologians might make the best terms that they could; but Eugenius made them understand that he wished to see the end. He might well gaze with sadness on the desolation which his unyielding spirit had wrought in the fortunes of the Church. France was practically independent of the Papacy; Germany was estranged; a rival Pope diminished the prestige of the Holy See; in Italy, Bologna was lost to the demains of the Church, and the March of Ancona was still in the hands of Sforza. He would bequeath a disastrous legacy to his successor; but the recovery of Germany would at least improve the position. Eugenius longed to signalise his last days by a worthy achievement; on their side the envoys of the German King wished their mission to succeed. Now that a goal of some sort was in view, all were eager to reach it. If the Pope

Illness of  
Eugenius  
IV.

died before matters were decided, the powers of the envoys came to an end, for they were only commissioned to negotiate with Eugenius. The Germans did not wish to sacrifice the present opportunity, and see everything again reduced to doubt.

The physicians gave Eugenius ten days to live when the conclusions of the Commission of Cardinals were laid before him. The Pope was too feeble to examine them fully, much more to go through the labour of reducing them to the form of Bulls. Scrupulous and persistent to the last, he dreaded even the semblance of concession when the decisive moment came. When he finally decided to give way he devised a subterfuge to save his conscience. On February 5 he signed a secret protest setting forth that the German King and Electors had desired from him certain things 'which the necessity and utility of the Church compel us in some way to grant, that we may allure them to the unity of the Church and our obedience. We, to avoid all scandal and danger which may follow, and being unwilling to say, confirm, or grant anything contrary to the doctrine of the Fathers or prejudicial to the Holy See, since through sickness we cannot examine and weigh the concessions with that thoroughness of judgment which their gravity requires, protest that by our concessions we do not intend to derogate from the doctrine of the Fathers or the authority and privileges of the Apostolic See.'<sup>1</sup>

By this pitiful proceeding the dying Pope prepared to enter into engagements which his successor might repudiate. He was ready to receive the restitution of the German obedience; but the German envoys, on their side, began to hesitate. They did not, of course, know the secret protest of the Pope; but they doubted whether they ought to take a step which might divide Germany, when they had no guarantee that the successor of the death-stricken Eugenius would pursue his

Restoration of the German obedience. February 7, 1447.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, 1447, No. 7.

policy ; John of Lysura, who was now as zealous for reconciliation as before he had been anxious for reform, plausibly argued that they were dealing with the Roman See, which never died ; the Bulls of Eugenius would bind his successor. If they left Rome without declaring the obedience of Germany, the existing disposition of the Electors might change, and everything might again become doubtful. So long as Eugenius could stir his finger, it was enough. If they went away without accomplishing anything they would be ridiculous. Lysura and Æneas prevailed on the other ambassadors of the King and of the Archbishop of Mainz to resolve on a restoration of obedience to Eugenius IV.

On February 7 the ambassadors were admitted into the Pope's chamber. Eugenius still could greet them with dignity, but in a feeble voice requested that the proceedings should not be long. Æneas read the declaration of obedience, and Eugenius handed him the Bulls, which he gave to the ambassadors of the Archbishop of Mainz as being the primate of Germany. The envoys of the Pfalzgraf and of Saxony excused themselves from joining in the declaration ; they were not empowered to do so, but they had no doubt that their princes would give their assent in the forthcoming Diet at Nürnberg. Eugenius thanked God for the work that had been accomplished, and dismissed, with his benediction, the ambassadors, who were moved to tears at the sight of the dying man. A public Consistory was held immediately afterwards before the whole Curia ; over a thousand men were present. Æneas spoke for the King, Lysura for the Archbishop of Mainz, the other ambassadors followed. The Vice-Chancellor, in the Pope's behalf, spoke words of thankfulness, and the Consistory broke up amid the joyous peals of bells with which Rome celebrated its triumph. The city blazed with bonfires ; the next day was a general holiday, and was devoted to a special service of thanksgiving.

The German envoys stayed in Rome, waiting for the

Death of  
Eugenius  
IV. Feb-  
ruary 23,  
1447.

necessary copies of the Bulls, and anxious about the new election. Day by day Eugenius grew visibly worse, and there were signs of disturbances to follow on his death. Alfonso of Naples advanced with an army within fifteen miles of Rome. There were troubles at Viterbo, and in Rome itself the people were anxious to be rid of the severe rule of Cardinal Scarampo, the favourite of Eugenius. Amidst this universal disquiet Eugenius died hard. When the Archbishop of Florence wished to administer supreme unction the Pope refused, saying, 'I am still strong; I know my time; when the hour is come I will send for you'. Alfonso of Naples, on hearing this, exclaimed, 'What wonder that the Pope, who has warred against Sforza, the Colonna, myself, and all Italy, dares to fight against death also!'

At length Eugenius felt that his last hour was approaching. Summoning the Cardinals, he addressed to them his last words. Many evils, he said, had befallen the Holy See during his pontificate, yet the ways of Providence were inscrutable, and he rejoiced, at last before he died, to see the Church reunited. 'Now, before I appear in the presence of the Great Judge, I wish to leave with you my testament. I have created you all Cardinals save one, and him I have loved as a son. I beseech you, keep the bond of peace, and let there be no divisions among you. You know what sort of a Pope the Holy See requires; elect a successor in wisdom and character superior to me. If you listen to me, you will rather elect with unanimity a moderate man than a distinguished one with discord. We have reunited the Church, but the root of discord still remains; be careful that it does not go up afresh. That there be no dispute about my funeral, bury me simply, and lay me in a lowly place by the side of Eugenius III.' All wept as they heard him.<sup>1</sup> He received supreme unction, was placed in S. Peter's

<sup>1</sup> This account is given by Æneas Sylvius in his letter from Rome to Frederick III., Muratori, vol. iii., pt. 2, p. 889. The other account is given by Vespasiano, *Vita di Eugenio IV.*

chair, and there died on February 23, at the age of sixty-two. According to Vespasiano da Bisticci, he exclaimed shortly before his death: 'O Gabrielle, how much better had it been for your soul's health had you never become Pope or Cardinal, but died a simple monk! Poor creatures that we are, we know ourselves at last.' His body was exhibited to public view, and he was buried, according to his desire, in S. Peter's, by the side of Eugenius III.

Amid the disastrous events of his pontificate, the personal character of Eugenius IV. seems to play an insignificant part. At his accession he had to face a difficult problem, which would have tried the tact and patience of the largest and wisest mind. But Eugenius was a narrow-minded monk, with no experience of the world and a large fund of obstinacy. He quarrelled with the Romans; he alarmed the politicians of Italy; he offended a strong party in the Curia, and finally proceeded to defy a Council which was supported by the moral approval of Europe. Such wisdom as Eugenius IV. ever gained, he gained in the hard school of experience. After the mistakes of the first year of his pontificate, the rest of his life was a desperate struggle for existence. The one quality that helped him in his misfortune was the same obstinacy as first led him astray.<sup>1</sup> Where a more sensitive or a more timid man might have been disposed for compromise Eugenius stood firm, and in the long run won a tardy victory, not by his own skill, but through the faults of his opponents. Time was on the side of the representative of an old institution, and every mistake of the Council brought strength to the Pope. Those who at first attacked him through bitter personal animosity gradually found that he was the symbol of a system which they did not dare to destroy. The wisdom and skill of eminent men, which at first enabled the Council to attack the Pope, were gradually transferred to the Pope's service. Every mistake committed

Character  
of Eugene-  
nius IV.

<sup>1</sup> 'Fu molto capitoso e di dura testa' is the testimony of Paolo Petrone. Mur., xxiv., 1130.

by the Council lost it a few adherents, alarmed at the dangers which they foresaw, or anxious for their own personal interests, but all determined on the overthrow of that which they had forsaken. To them Eugenius IV. was necessary ; and they paid him greater reverence through remorse for the wrongs which they had formerly done him.<sup>1</sup> No man is so zealous as one who has deliberately changed his convictions ; and the success of Eugenius at the last was due to the zeal of those who had deserted the Council. Hence Eugenius IV. was faithfully served in his latter days, though he inspired no enthusiasm. He was the Pope, the Italian Pope, and as such was the necessary leader of those who wished to maintain the prestige of the Papacy, and to keep it secure in its seat at Rome. But he was outside the chief interests, intellectual and political, which were moving Italy. Politically, he pursued a course of his own, and was not trusted by Venice, nor Florence, nor by the Duke of Milan, nor by Alfonso of Naples, while in Rome itself his rule was harsh and oppressive both to the barons and the people. He was a man of little culture, and such ideas as he had were framed upon his monastic training. Yet, though he was untouched by the classical revival, he was not opposed to it. Among his secretaries were Poggio Bracciolini, Flavio Biondo, Maffeo Vegio, Giovanni Aurispa, and Piero de Noceto.<sup>2</sup> He welcomed at Rome the antiquary Ciriaco of Ancona and the humanist George of Trebizond, and employed in his affairs the learned Ambrogio Traversari. He pursued the plan of Martin V. to restore the decayed buildings of Rome ; and in his later days summoned Fra Angelico to decorate the Vatican Chapel. He also invited to Rome the great Florentine sculptor Donatello ; but his plans were interrupted by the disturbances of 1434 and his flight from the city. While at Florence he so

<sup>1</sup> The final judgment of Æneas Sylvius was : ' Alti cordis fuit, sed nulum in eo magis vitium fuit, nisi quia sine mensura erat, et non quod potuit sed quod voluit aggressus est,' Mur., iii., pt. 2, p. 891.

<sup>2</sup> See Bonamici, *De Claris Pontificiarum litterarum Scriptoribus*.



admired Ghiberti's magnificent gates to the Baptistery that he resolved to decorate S. Peter's by a like work, which he entrusted to a mediocre but eminently orthodox artist, Antonio Filarete. The gates of Eugenius IV. still adorn the central doorway of S. Peter's, and are a testimony of the Pope's good intentions rather than of his artistic feelings. Large figures, stiffly and ungracefully executed, of Christ, the Virgin, SS. Peter and Paul, fill the chief panels; between them are small reliefs commemorating the glories of the Pontificate of Eugenius IV., the coming of the Greeks to Ferrara, the Council of Florence, the coronation of Sigismund, the envoys of the oriental Churches in Rome. On the lower panels are representations of martyrdoms of saints. The reliefs are destitute of expression and are architecturally ineffective. The imagination of the artist has been reserved for the arabesque work which frames them. There every possible subject seems to be blended in wild confusion—classical legends, medallions of Roman emperors, illustrations of Æsop's fables, allegories of the seasons, representations of games and sports—all are interwoven amongst heavy wreaths of ungraceful foliage. Eugenius IV. showed his respect for antiquity by restoring the Pantheon, but did not scruple to carry off for his other works the stones of the Colosseum.<sup>1</sup> Though personally modest and retiring, he had all the Venetian love of public splendour; he caused Ghiberti to design a magnificent Papal tiara, which cost 30,000 golden ducats. Without possessing any taste of his own, Eugenius IV. so far followed the fashion of his time that he prepared the way for the outburst of magnificence which Nicolas V. made part of the Papal policy.

The object, however, which lay nearest the heart of Eugenius IV. was the promotion of the Franciscan Order, to which he himself had belonged. The friars held a chief place at his court, and were admitted at once to the Papal presence, where their affairs had precedence over all others,

<sup>1</sup> See Müntz, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i., 32, etc.

to the great indignation of the humanists. Poggio rejoiced that under the successor of Eugenius the reign of hypocrisy was at an end,<sup>1</sup> and friars would no longer swarm like rats in Rome. If the policy of Eugenius was to erect the friars once more into a powerful arm of the Holy See, the corrupt state of the body made such a restoration impossible. Yet Eugenius would give more attention to remodelling the rules of a religious order than to the great questions which surrounded him on every side. His notion of ecclesiastical reform was to turn monastic orders into orders of friars, and he met the demands of the Fathers of Basel by displaying great activity in this hopeless work.<sup>2</sup>

In person Eugenius IV. was tall, of a spare figure, and of imposing aspect. Though he drank nothing but water, he was a martyr to gout. He was attentive to all his religious duties, lived sparingly, and was liberal of alms. He slept little, and used to wake early and read devotional books. He was reserved and retiring, averse to public appearances, and so modest that in public he scarcely lifted his eyes from the ground.<sup>3</sup> Though stubborn and self-willed, he bore no malice, and was ready to forgive those who had attacked him. He had few intimates; but when he once gave his confidence he gave it unreservedly, and Vitelleschi and Scarampo successively directed his affairs in Italy. A man of monastic and old-fashioned piety, he was destitute of political capacity, and was more fitted to be an abbot than a Pope. What might in a smaller sphere have been firmness of purpose, became narrow obstinacy in the ruler of the Universal Church. It is a proof of the firm foundation of Papacy in the political system of Europe, that it was too deeply rooted for the mismanagement of Eugenius IV., at a dangerous crisis of its history, to upset its stability.

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogus contra hypocrisim*, in *Fasciculus Rerum*; Appendix, 571.

<sup>2</sup> Vespasiano, *Vita di Eugenio IV.*, 'attendeva con ogni diligenza a riformare la Chiesa, e fare che i religiosi stessino a' termini loro, ed i conventuali fargli osservanti, giusto alla possa sua'.

<sup>3</sup> Raffaele de Volterra, *Commentarii (Anthropologia)*, xxii.: 'oculus in publico nunquam attollebat, ut a parente meo, qui eum sequebatur, accepi'.

## CHAPTER II.

## NICOLAS V. AND THE AFFAIRS OF GERMANY.

1447—1453.

ON the death of Eugenius IV. the troubled state of Rome made the Cardinals anxious about the future. It was of the utmost importance for the peace of the Church that the new election should be peaceable and orderly, that the new Pope should have an undoubted title; but the attitude of the Romans, who had endured with murmurs the rule of Eugenius IV., made the Cardinals dread a repetition of the tumults which had caused the Schism. The citizens of Rome held a meeting in the monastery of Araceli to draw up demands which should be submitted to the Cardinals.<sup>1</sup> The Cardinals in dismay urged the Archbishop of Benevento, Cardinal Agnesi, to attend the meeting and confer with the citizens. The leader of the Romans was Stefano Porcaro, a man of considerable knowledge of affairs, sprung from an old burgher's stock in Rome. Porcaro recommended himself by his capacity to Martin V., who obtained for him the post of Capitano del Popolo in Florence. There he became acquainted with many of the chief humanists, and on leaving Florence he travelled in France and Germany. By Eugenius IV. he was made Podestà of Bologna, where his reputation increased, and he won the friendship of Ambrogio Traversari,<sup>2</sup> who advised the Pope to employ Porcaro as mediator

Republican feeling at Rome.  
1447.

<sup>1</sup> Infessura, in Mur., iii., 2, 1131; *Æn. Syl.*, *id.*, 891.

<sup>2</sup> Our chief information about the early life of Porcaro comes from scattered notices amongst the letters of Traversari.

with the rebellious Romans in 1434. Eugenius refused all mediation, and his obstinacy was rewarded by success ; but it alienated Porcaro from the Papal service, and his classical studies drifted him to the republicanism of ancient Rome. In the assembly at Araceli Porcaro rose, and in a fiery speech stirred the citizens to remember their ancient liberties. They ought, at least, to have an agreement with the Pope such as even the smallest towns in the States of the Church had managed to obtain. Many agreed with him,<sup>1</sup> and the Archbishop of Benevento had some difficulty in reducing him to silence. The assembly broke up in confusion, and many citizens gathered round Porcaro.

But the Republican party was afraid to move through fear of Alfonso of Naples, who lay at Tivoli with an army, with a view of influencing the new election. He had already sent a message to the Cardinals that he was there to secure for them a free election, and was at their commands. The Romans felt he would use any movement on their part as a pretext for seizing the city ; and it was useless to escape from the rule of the Church only to fall under that of the King of Naples. Accordingly the Republican party held its hand. The keys of the city were given to the Cardinals, who made the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights guardian of the Capitol, and published a decree ordering the barons to leave Rome. The bands who were flocking from the country into the city were excluded, the barons unwillingly departed, and all was quiet when, on March 4, the Cardinals went into conclave in the dormitory of the cloister of S. Maria sopra Minerva.

Æneas Sylvius gives a description of the preparations for the conclave. The dormitory was divided into cells for the eighteen Cardinals present ; but on this occasion the partitions were of cloth, not of wood. Lots were drawn for the distribution of the cells, which each Cardinal adorned with hangings according to his

Peace  
kept by  
Alfonso of  
Naples.

<sup>1</sup> 'Disse alcune cose utili per la nostra Repubblica,' says Infessura, Mur., iii., pt. 2, 1131.

taste. Each entered the conclave with his attendants, a chaplain and a cross-bearer; each had his own food sent him every day in a wooden box, on which his arms were emblazoned. These boxes were carried through the streets in a way that made the city seem to be full of funerals; they were accompanied by a procession of the Cardinal's household and all his dependents, who had so contracted the habit of flattery that, when their master was not there, they were fain to grovel for the box that contained his dinner.<sup>1</sup>

When the eighteen Cardinals entered the conclave it was the general expectation that their choice would fall on Prospero Colonna, the nephew of Martin V. But the old Roman proverb, 'He who goes into the conclave a Pope comes out a Cardinal,' was again proved true. Prospero Colonna was supported by the powerful Cardinals Scarampo and Le Jeune; but the party of the Orsini was strongly opposed to an election from the house of their rivals, and many of the Cardinals thought that it would be bad policy to run the risk of kindling discord in the city. The opponents of Colonna were more anxious to prevent his election than careful who else was elected. On the first scrutiny Colonna had ten votes and Capranica eight. In the hopes of agreeing on another candidate, various names were suggested of those outside the college, such as the Archbishop of Benevento and Nicolas of Cusa. On the second scrutiny Colonna still had ten votes, but the votes of his opponents were more divided, and three were given for Thomas of Bologna. The election of Colonna now seemed secure. 'Why do we waste time,' said Cardinal Le Jeune, 'when delay is hurtful to the Church? The city is disturbed; King Alfonso is at the gates; the Duke of Savoy is plotting against us; Sforza is our foe. Why do we not elect a Pope? God has sent

Election  
of Tom-  
maso  
Parentu-  
celli, Nico-  
las V.  
March 6,  
1447.

<sup>1</sup> 'Usque adeo miseros Curiales adulandi consuetudo illexit ut quum Cardinalibus nequeant Cornutis assententur.' Mur., iii., 2, 892. The boxes were called Cornuta.

us a gentle lamb, the Cardinal Colonna : he only needs two votes ; if one be given, the other will follow.' There was a brief silence ; then Thomas of Bologna rose to give his vote for Colonna. The Cardinal of Taranto eagerly stopped him. 'Pause,' he said, 'and reflect that we are not electing a ruler of a city but of the Universal Church. Let us not be too hasty.' 'You mean that you oppose Colonna,' exclaimed Scarampo ; 'if the election were going according to your wishes, you would not speak of haste. You wish to object, not to deliberate. Tell us whom you want for Pope.' To parry this home-thrust, which was true, the Cardinal of Taranto found it necessary to mention some one definitely. 'Thomas of Bologna,' he exclaimed. 'I accept him,' said Scarampo, who was followed by Le Jeune, and soon Thomas had eleven votes in his favour.' Finally, Torquemada said, 'I, too, vote for Thomas, and make him Pope ; to-day we celebrate the vigil of S. Thomas'. The others accepted the election that it might be unanimous, and Cardinal Colonna announced it to the people. The mob could not hear him, and a cry was raised that he was Pope. The Orsini roused themselves ; the people, according to old custom, pillaged Colonna's house. Their mistake was lucky for themselves, as Thomas was a poor man, and they found little booty in his house afterwards. The election was a universal surprise. The Cardinal of Portugal, as he limped out of the conclave, when asked if the Cardinals had elected a Pope, answered, 'No, God has chosen a Pope, not the Cardinals'.

Tommaso Parentucelli<sup>1</sup> sprang from an obscure family at Sarzana, a little town not far from Spezia, in the diocese of Lucca. His father, Bartolommeo, was a physician in Pisa or Lucca, it is not certain which. At the age of seven he lost his father, and his

Early life  
of Paren-  
tucelli.

<sup>1</sup> The very name is uncertain. Manetti, *Mur.*, iii., 2, 107, says : 'De nobili Parentucellorum progenie'. Two Bulls of Felix V. (*Mansi*, xxxi., 188, 190) call him Thomas de Calandrinis ; but Ciaconius, ii., 961, gives from Oldoinus two inscriptions from a tomb at Sarzana which call his mother Andreola de Calderinis, and an uncle J. P. Parentucelli.



mother soon afterwards married again ; but she was careful to give her son a good education, and at the age of twelve sent him to school at Bologna. As he had to make his own way in the world, he went to Florence at the age of nineteen, and acted as private tutor to the sons, first of Rinaldo degli Albizzi, and afterwards of Palla Strozzi. By this means he saved in three years enough money to enable him to return to Bologna and continue his studies at the University, where he attracted the notice of the bishop of the city, Niccolo Albergata, who took him into his service. For twenty years Parentucelli continued to be at the head of Albergata's household ; he looked upon the Cardinal as a second father, and served him with zeal. But he was a genuine student, and employed his leisure in theological reading. He became famous for his large and varied knowledge, his great powers of memory, and his readiness and quickness as a disputant. In Albergata's service he accompanied his master on many embassies, and obtained an insight into the politics of Europe, while at the same time, by his own reputation for learning, he made acquaintance with the chief scholars of Italy. No one had a greater knowledge of books, and Cosimo de' Medici consulted him about the formation of the library of S. Marco. The only luxury in which Parentucelli indulged was in books, for which he had a student's love. He was careful to have fair manuscripts made for his own use, and was himself famous for his beautiful handwriting.<sup>1</sup>

On the death of Albergata in 1443 Parentucelli entered the service of Cardinal Landriani, and after his death in the same year was employed by Eugenius IV., who soon made him Bishop of Bologna. But Bologna was in revolt against the Pope, and Parentucelli gained such scanty revenues either from his see or from the bounty of Eugenius IV., that he was driven to borrow money from Cosimo de'

<sup>1</sup> Vespasiano da Bisticci, himself a Florentine bookseller, speaks with admiration of the technical skill of Parentucelli as a scribe and a librarian.

Medici to enable him to discharge his legation in Germany. Such was Cosimo's friendship that he gave him a general letter of credit to all his correspondents. The embassy in Germany led to important results, and Eugenius IV. recognised the merits of Parentucelli by making him Cardinal in December, 1446. He had only enjoyed his new dignity a few months before his elevation to the Papacy. His first act was a sign of gratitude to his early patron and friend. He took the pontifical title of Nicolas V. in remembrance of Niccolo Albergata.

Concilia-  
tory mea-  
sures of  
Nicolas V. any political party, it was at least objectionable to none. The Colonna, the Orsini, Venice, the Duke of Milan, the King of France, the King of Naples, all had hoped for an election in their own special interest. All were disappointed; but at least they had the satisfaction of considering that their opponents had gained as little as themselves. No one could object to the new Pope. He was a man of high character and tried capacity. He had made himself friends everywhere by his learning, and had made no enemies by his politics. Alfonso of Naples sent four ambassadors to congratulate him and be present at his coronation. Æneas Sylvius waited on him to receive a confirmation of the agreement which Eugenius IV. had made with Germany. 'I will not only confirm but execute it,' was the answer of Nicolas. 'In my opinion the Roman Pontiffs have too greatly extended their authority, and left the other bishops no jurisdiction. It is a just judgment that the Council of Basel has in turn shortened too much the hands of the Holy See. We intend to strengthen the bishops, and hope to maintain our own power most surely by not usurping that of others.'<sup>1</sup> These words of Nicolas V. express the entire situation of ecclesiastical affairs. If his policy could only have been carried out, the future of the Church might still have been assured. In the same

<sup>1</sup> In Mur., iii., pt. 2, 895.

sense he spoke about secular matters to his old friend the Florentine bookseller, Vespasiano da Bisticci. Vespasiano presented himself at a public audience, and Nicolas bade him wait till he was done. Then he took him into a private room, and said with a smile, 'Would the people of Florence have believed that the simple priest who rang the bell would one day become Pope to the confusion of the proud?' Vespasiano answered that his elevation was due to his merits, and that he now might pacify Italy. 'I pray God,' said Nicolas, 'that He will give me grace to carry out my intention, which is to pacify Italy, and to use in my pontificate no other arms than those which Christ has given me, that is, His Cross.'

The pacific character of the new Pope made him generally acceptable. After his coronation on March 18, embassies from the various Italian States flowed into Rome, and the dexterity and precision with which Nicolas answered their harangues increased the opinion which men already had of his capacity. He received the embassies in open consistory, so that those who wished to regale themselves with a banquet of eloquence might be fully satisfied. Already in Italy a cultivated taste had begun to attach great importance to the neat and decorous performance of formal duties. Cities were anxious to have in their service men whose speeches on public occasions could win applause by the elegance of their style; and scholars rose to the rank of State officials by the reputation which they gained from these public appearances. Under Eugenius IV. the Papacy had not given much encouragement to this display of eloquence; but Nicolas V., himself a scholar and the friend of scholars, was willing to fall in with the prevalent taste. His public audiences were crowded with critics, and reputations were made or unmade in a morning. The complimentary harangue began to hold the same relation to the new culture of the Renaissance as had the scholastic disputation to the erudition of the Middle Ages. In this arena of eloquence

Embassies  
of congratulation  
to the new  
Pope.

Nicolas V. himself could hold his own with the best, not so much by elegance of style as by the readiness with which he could aptly reply, on the spur of the moment, to an elaborately prepared speech. The very graces of the orator who had preceded him lent a foil to the readiness of the Pope. Thus the Florentine embassy was headed by the learned Gianozzo Manetti, who spoke for an hour and a quarter. The Pope, with his hand before his face, seemed to be asleep, and one of his attendants touched his arm to wake him. But when Gianozzo had finished, Nicolas took each of his points in order, and gave a suitable answer to them all. The audience knew not which to admire most, the grace of the orator or the aptness of the Pope.<sup>1</sup> The cleverness of Nicolas V. soon won for him the respect of those who at first looked with disfavour on the insignificant appearance of the successor of the majestic Eugenius IV. Nicolas V. had no outward graces to commend him. He was little, with weak legs disproportionately small for his body; a face of ashen complexion brought into still greater prominence his black flashing eyes; his voice was loud and harsh; his mouth small, with heavily protruding lips.

Nicolas V., however, had more serious work in hand than the reception of ambassadors. His first care, naturally, was to secure the restoration of the German obedience. Æneas Sylvius made Bishop of Trieste. 1447. Æneas Sylvius, who had acted as cross-bearer at the Pope's coronation on March 18, set out on March 30 to carry to Frederick III. the confirmation by Nicolas V. of the engagements of his predecessor. Æneas advised the King to renew his declaration of obedience, and order all men to receive honourably the Pope's legates; so would he end the schism, conciliate the Pope, win back Hungary, and prepare the way for his coronation as Emperor. Æneas himself soon received a mark of the Pope's favour in the shape of a nomination to the vacant bishopric of Trieste. As Æneas found himself rising in the

<sup>1</sup> Vespasiano, *Vita di Nicola V.*

world, and his age advanced beyond the temptations of youthful passion, his objections to take Holy Orders had died away. In 1446 he resolved to live more cleanly, 'to abandon,' as he said, 'Venus for Bacchus'. He was ordained, and 'loved nothing so much as the priesthood'. Only through ecclesiastical preferment could he hope for any recognition of his services. While he was at Rome there came a report of the death of the Bishop of Trieste, and Eugenius IV. was ready to appoint Æneas to the vacant see. The Bishop of Trieste outlived Eugenius; but Nicolas V. carried out his predecessor's intention, disregarding the fact that, by the compact between Eugenius and Frederick, Trieste was one of the bishoprics granted to the King's nomination. No difficulty, however, arose on this head, as Frederick III., independently of the Pope, had nominated Æneas. It is true that the Chapter of Trieste tried to assert their rights, but were at once set aside by the King and Pope, and Æneas won his first decided step in the way of preferment.<sup>1</sup>

As affairs stood in Germany, the King, the Archbishop of Mainz, and the Elector of Brandenburg were ready to acknowledge Nicolas V.; the other Electors had not yet declared themselves. Wishing to make the best terms for themselves, they turned to the King of France, who held a congress at Bourges in June. Jacob of Trier went there in person; the other Electors sent representatives. England, Scotland, Burgundy, and Castile were all ready to follow the French King, who thus asserted in the affairs of the Church the authority which had previously belonged to the Emperor. The conclusions signed at Bourges on June 28 were a little in advance of those accepted by Frederick III. The King of France and the Electors were ready to acknowledge Nicolas V. if he recognised the existing condition of ecclesiastical affairs, agreed to summon a Council on September 1, 1448, in some place to be deter-

Congress  
at Bour-  
ges. June,  
1447.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comment.*, 14.

mined by the French King, accepted the Constance decrees, and agreed to provide for his rival, Felix V.<sup>1</sup> There was in this a pretence of standing upon the conciliar basis, and maintaining the cause of reform more definitely than Frederick III. had done; but it was done by an alliance with the French King, the enemy of the German nation. It was the expression of anarchy and self-interest rather than any care for the national welfare; it was merely a means of making better terms than could be obtained by joining Frederick III. The Congress then moved from Bourges to Lyons, that it might more easily negotiate with Felix V. the terms of his abdication.

Meanwhile Frederick III. summoned an assembly of the princes who had joined his party at Aschaffenburg on July 12. The Archbishop of Mainz presided, and the assembly confirmed what had been done at Rome. Frederick III. withdrew his safe-conduct from the Council of Basel, and ordered it to disperse; but no immediate heed was paid to his command. On August 21 he published in Vienna a general edict announcing his adhesion to the conclusion of the assembly at Aschaffenburg, and forbade, under the ban of the Empire, any adhesion to Felix V. or the Council of Basel.<sup>2</sup> The proclamation was celebrated by festivities in Vienna and by a solemn procession. But this display of joy was fictitious, and the University was only driven to take part in the procession under threat of deprivation of its revenues and benefices.<sup>3</sup> The academic feeling remained till the last true to the conciliar cause.

But the Papal diplomacy steadily pursued its course. Æneas Sylvius found himself, as Bishop of Trieste, occupied in the same way as when he held the inferior office of royal secretary. He was sent to Köln to win over the archbishop, and succeeded in

Congress  
of Asch-  
affenburg.  
July, 1447.

Æneas  
Sylvius  
justifies  
his  
conduct.

<sup>1</sup> *Advisata in facto pacis ecclesiæ*, in D'Achery, *Spicilegium*, iii., 770. Labbe, xiii., 1330.

<sup>2</sup> See Chmel's *Materialien*, i., 245; Raynaldus, 1447, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Mitterdorfer, *Hist. Univ. Viennens*, i., 161.



the object of his mission. But at Köln he found himself regarded by the University as an apostate; the sneers which had elsewhere been spoken behind his back were there expressed before his face. Æneas found it necessary to justify himself in a letter addressed to the rector of the University, and his apology is full of characteristic shrewdness.<sup>1</sup> He went to Basel, he said, an unfledged nestling from Siena; there he heard nothing but abuse of Eugenius, and was too inexperienced to disbelieve what he heard. Dazzled by the eminence of the Council's leaders, he followed in their track, and his vanity led him to write against Eugenius. But God had mercy on him, and he went to Frankfort as Saul had gone to Damascus. If even Augustine had written confessions, why should not he? At Frederick's Court he first began to hear both sides, and gradually became neutral, till the arguments of Cesarini convinced him that he ought to leave the Council's party. His chief reasons for doing so were: (1) The wrongful proceedings against the Pope, who was neither heretical, schismatic, nor a cause of scandal, and therefore ought not justly to be deposed; (2) the nullity of the Council, which had been translated by the Pope, did not represent the Universal Church, and was not supported by any nation in Europe except Savoy; (3) the Council did not trust the justice of its own cause; was faith only to be found at Basel, as Apollo gave oracles only at Delphi?—by refusing to go elsewhere the Council showed disbelief in itself.

Thus Æneas justified himself, and the cause of Nicolas V. progressed, as the Electors saw that they could gain something from the Pope. Jacob of Trier began to make terms for himself. Dietrich of Köln used Carvajal to mediate in a troublesome dispute between himself and the Duke of Cleves. The Pfalzgraf, though the son-in-law of Felix V., was content with exacting a few concessions from Frederick III., and sent his ambas-

The  
German  
Electors  
recognise  
Nicolas V.  
1448.

<sup>1</sup> It is given in Fea, *Pius II. a calumniis vindicatus*, p. 1.

sador to Rome. The Elector of Saxony obtained corresponding favours from the King. On no side was there any real care for Church reform; it merely served as a cry under cover of which the Electors sought to promote their own power and their own interests. Early in 1448 the whole of Germany had entered the obedience of Nicolas V.

In accordance with the undertaking of Eugenius IV., a legate was sent to Germany to arrange for the liberties of the German Church in the future, and the no less important question of the provision to be made for the Pope out of its revenues. Cardinal Carvajal was wisely chosen for this purpose, and the Concordat at Vienna on February 16, 1448, was the work of himself and the King. It was not submitted to a Diet, though no doubt many representatives of the Electors and the princes were at Vienna. It would seem that the assembly of Aschaffenburg was dexterously turned into a Diet; and the Concordat, made in the name of the German nation, was regarded as being a necessary consequence of that assembly.<sup>1</sup>

The Concordat of Vienna and the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges represent the net result of the reforming movement at Basel, and in their form, as well as their contents, go back to the system pursued at the end of the Council of Constance. The strength of the reforming party was its cry for the redress of grievances which each national Church experienced from Papal interference. Its weakness lay in the fact that it had not sufficient statesmanship to devise a means of redressing these grievances without destroying the constitution of the Church under the Papal monarchy. The Council of Constance fell in pieces before the difficulties of this task, and produced merely a temporary agreement between the Papacy and the national Churches concerning a few matters of complaint. The Council of Basel, in its desire to abolish abuses,

<sup>1</sup> The Concordat has been often printed, best by Koch, *Sanctio Pragmatica Germanorum Illustrata*. Argentor., 1789, p. 210.

threatened to sweep away also the basis of the Papal monarchy, and so became engaged in an irreconcilable contest with the Papacy, in which it was not supported by the public opinion of Europe. In this state of things France used the opportunity to regulate by royal authority the relations of the Gallican Church to Rome. Germany, after a vain indeavour to arbitrate as neutral between the rival Popes, fell back upon the old method of a Concordat, and aimed merely at extending the basis which had been established at Constance. The Concordat of Constance was made provisionally for five years only; the Concordat of Vienna was meant, on the Papal side, to be permanent. It was, of course, true that Eugenius IV. had agreed in February, 1447, that another Council should be assembled within ten months. A year passed, and nothing was done towards summoning a Council. The Concordat of Vienna confirmed all that Eugenius IV. had granted, 'so far as they do not go against this present agreement'; it made no mention of a Council, and the promise of Eugenius IV. lapsed through non-fulfilment.

Thus Germany was contented to accept as the settlement of its grievances a private agreement between the King and the Pope. The question arranged by the Concordat of Vienna was the relations henceforth to exist between the Papacy and the German Church. It was little more than a repetition of the Concordat of Constance; but such alterations as were made were in favour of the Pope.

Provisions  
of the Con-  
cordat.

It dealt only with the grievances caused by Papal reservations and Papal interference with elections. It admitted the right of Papal reservation to benefices whose holders died at the Roman Court or within two days' journey from Rome, to vacancies caused by Papal deprivation or translation, to benefices vacated by the deaths of Cardinals or other officials of the Curia, to offices held by any promoted by the Pope to a bishopric, monastery, or other office incompatible with residence. Moreover, Papal provisions were allowed to

benefices, excepting the higher offices in cathedrals and collegiate churches, such as might fall vacant in the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November. The Concordat of Constance had given to the Pope alternate benefices. The Concordat of Vienna gave him alternate months, and it is noticeable that by this arrangement the Pope secured 184 out of the 365 days of the year.

The Papal right of confirmation of other elections was retained as before. In case the elections were canonical, the Pope was to confirm them, unless 'from some reasonable and evident cause, and with the consent of the Cardinals, the Pope thought that provision should be made for some more useful and more worthy person'. If the elections were found to be uncanonical, the Pope was to provide. The dues to the Curia, annates, first-fruits, and the rest, were to be paid in two portions within two years. If the rates were thought excessive, the Pope was willing to have a revaluation; also he was ready to take into account any special circumstances which affected at any time the revenues of the office so taxed. Benefices below the annual value of twenty-four florins were to be exempt.

The Papal restoration was complete. The German Church gained nothing. The only points which showed any care for its interests were provisions that the Papal reservation should be exercised only in favour of Germans, and that the Papal months should be accepted by the Ordinaries. These advantages were, however, seeming rather than real. If so much were secured by the Papacy, it would be difficult to prevent it from overstepping these slight barriers.

No mention was made in the Concordat of the Council of Basel or of its decrees. The reforming movement had been a political failure, and the fruits of its labours were swept away by the reaction. The Council had not succeeded in accomplishing any of its objects. It had not even impressed the Curia with a sense of the gravity of the crisis from which it had escaped. The restored Papacy was only bent on going

back to its old lines, and showed no desire to lay the foundations of a gradual reform of the abuses which had exposed it to so grave a peril. The Concordat was signed at Vienna on February 18; it was confirmed at Rome on March 19, 'after careful investigation by learned canonists and eminent Cardinals,' though the intervening time barely allowed it to be carried from one place to another.

The reason why Frederick III. submitted to terms, which were so manifestly in the Pope's favour, was the need which he felt of maintaining his alliance with the Pope as the only means of checking the electoral oligarchy, and preventing their further connexion with France. He had no ground for opposing the Papal power of reservation. His private agreement with Eugenius IV. allowed the Pope to confer upon him privileges which were founded on the Papal right of reservation. The assent of the Electors was gained by bribes of different kinds; the Archbishops were won over, like the King, by grants of some of the Papal reservations.<sup>1</sup> The Pope bought back the obedience of Germany by granting to the existing representatives of the German Church and nation some of the privileges which were restored to the Papacy. As the existing generation died out everything would again revert to the Pope.

Motives  
for the  
acceptance  
of the Con-  
cordat by  
Germany.

The conclusion of the Concordat of Vienna ended the dwindling existence of the Council of Basel. On May 18 Frederick III. forbade the city of Basel, under threat of the ban of the Empire, to harbour the Council within its walls. The citizens found it necessary at last to yield, and on July 7 five hundred of them honourably escorted the remnants of the Council on their way to Lausanne, whither they transferred themselves under the protection of the French King. Charles VII. undertook the task of bringing the schism to an end, and played the same part in ecclesiastical affairs as Sigismund had done in the previous generation. Felix V. was weary of his shadowy

Abdica-  
tion of  
Felix V.  
April, 1449.

<sup>1</sup> See Pückert, *Die Kurfürstliche Neutralität*, p. 321.

dignity. The conciliatory temper of Nicolas V. towards him and Charles VII. made the ultimate settlement tolerably easy.<sup>1</sup> The ambassadors of England and of René of Anjou took part in the work, and Charles VII. obtained a promise from Nicolas V. that a new Council should be held in the dominions of France. On April 7, 1449, Felix V. laid aside his Papal office; but he did so in language that still asserted the principle which he had been elected to maintain: 'In this holy synod of Lausanne, representing the Universal Church, we lay aside the dignity and possession of the Papacy, hoping that the kings, princes, and prelates, to whom we judge that this our communication will be acceptable, will aid the authority of General Councils, will defend and support it; and that the Universal Church, for whose dignity and authority we have fought, will by its prayers commend our humility to the chief and eternal Shepherd'.

Well may the Papal chronicler remark that there is not a sentence, scarcely a word, in this which does not merit censure.<sup>2</sup> But Nicolas V. was not obstinate, like his predecessor; provided he won the substantial point, he was not careful about words. He had saved the Papal dignity by committing the conduct of the negotiation to Charles VII.; Felix V. might have his say provided he abdicated peaceably. The Council was also allowed to save its dignity. On April 19 it elected Nicolas V. as Pope, and on April 25 conferred by a decree on Amadeus the office of Cardinal, which Nicolas V. had agreed to grant him, together with the first place next to the Pope, the position of General Vicar within the dominions that had recognised him, and the outward honours of the Papal rank. The Council then decreed its own dissolution, and its members dispersed. True to his conciliatory policy, Nicolas V. restored D'Allemand to his office of Cardinal, and recognised three of the creations of Felix V. John of Segovia received

<sup>1</sup> The documents are in Martene, *Amp. Coll.*, viii., 988, etc., and Raynaldus, 1449.

<sup>2</sup> Raynaldus, 1449, 2.



from the Pope a little bishopric in Spain, where, hidden among the hills, he spent the rest of his days in Arabic studies, translated the Koran into Latin, and exposed its errors.<sup>1</sup> D'Allemand retired to his see of Arles, where he was famous for his personal piety and good works, and after his death, September 16, 1450, it was said that miracles were wrought at his tomb. So great was his fame for sanctity that Clement VII. in 1527 pronounced him worthy of the imitation of the faithful.<sup>2</sup> Amadeus did not long survive him; he died on January 7, 1451, 'more useful to the Church by his death than by his life,' says Æneas Sylvius,<sup>3</sup> though most of his contemporaries are willing to forgive his previous misdeeds in remembrance of his renunciation.

Thus Nicolas V. had the satisfaction of seeing the schism brought to an end, its last remnants swept away, and the Papacy restored to a supremacy which it had not enjoyed for nearly a century. In Italy also Nicolas V. had the satisfaction of bringing back order into the Papal States. He soothed the rebellious spirit of the Romans by ordaining that only Romans should hold magistracies and benefices within the city, and that the imposts should be spent only for the good of the city.<sup>4</sup> He soothed the barons by his mildness, and did away with the grievances of the Colonna by allowing them to rebuild Palestrina, on condition that it should not be fortified. The knowledge which he had gained as Bishop of Bologna showed him that that city could be won by a compromise. He was content that it should recognise the sovereignty of the Holy See and admit a Papal legate, with certain powers of interference; otherwise it might retain the rule of the Bentivogli and appoint its own magistrates. The luckiest event, however, for Nicolas V. was the death, on August 13, 1447, of Filippo Maria Visconti, which left the affairs of Milan in confusion, and turned elsewhere the ambition of Francesco

Death of  
Filippo  
Maria Vis-  
conti. Au-  
gust, 1447.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Sylv., *De Europa*, ch. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Ciaconius, ii., 843.

<sup>3</sup> *Comment.*, ed. Fea, 114.

<sup>4</sup> Theiner, *Codex Diplomaticus*, iii., 314.

Sforza, who withdrew his forces from the March of Ancona, and left the Pope in undisputed possession.

Filippo Maria Visconti is a typical character of the last members of the princely families who had made themselves lords of the cities of Italy. He succeeded by caution, prudence, and treachery in gathering together the broad dominions of his father, Gian Galeazzo; but the strain which the effort involved seems to have paralysed his faculties. He had studied so carefully the mode by which a principality was won, that he had learned with fatal accuracy the ease with which it might be lost. His energies were entirely devoted to the security of his own person, the suppression of possible rivals, the maintenance of his own position. Though engaged in many wars to avert possible danger from his own dominions, he never personally took the field, and secured himself against his generals by playing off one against another. Thus he held the balance between Sforza and Piccinino; when one seemed likely to become too powerful his rival was pitted against him. Filippo Maria was assiduous in his attention to public matters, and regulated by minute ordinances the internal affairs of his state. He lived a lonely life in the castle of Milan and his country houses, to which he had canals constructed to convey him more secretly. He had no one around him whose character he had not tried by exposing them to temptations, while they did not suspect that he was watching. Access to him was difficult, and was only permitted after innumerable precautions. He was surrounded by spies, who were employed in checking one another. So afraid was he of assassination that he changed his bedroom two or three times in the night, and was never without a physician, whose advice he sought respecting the cause of every bodily sensation which he experienced. Yet he was a man of learning, and was especially interested in the heroes of past times and in the French romances of chivalry. He was careful in performing all religious offices, and never did anything without secret prayer. Even when

Character  
of Filippo  
Maria Vis-  
conti.

he left his chamber and looked upon the sun, he uncovered his head and gave God thanks. Yet he was full of superstitions, consulted astrologers, and was terrified at a thunder-storm. He had such a horror of death that he would have no one ill within his palace, nor would he allow the death of any one to be mentioned in his presence. Yet when his own death drew nigh he faced it with fortitude, and even hastened its approach by ordering his physician to open an old wound in his leg. His aim in life was simply to live in quietness and security, and his tortuous policy in Italy had no other object. He had a cynical contempt for mankind, and pursued none but purely selfish ends; yet he was neither cruel nor vicious, and possessed philosophic gravity and decorum.<sup>1</sup>

If Filippo Maria Visconti had succeeded during his lifetime in maintaining order in his dominions, he produced confusion by his death. His only child was an illegitimate daughter, Bianca, whose hand had been the bait which kept Francesco Sforza true to her father's service, till he at last succeeded in extorting a fulfilment of the promise so long delayed. The rule of the Visconti was not a recognised monarchy; and no rights of succession could pass through an illegitimate daughter. Yet Sforza aspired to the Duchy of Milan, and his claim rested on grounds as good as those of the other claimants. Alfonso of Naples asserted that Filippo Maria had named him as his successor by will; but the lordship of Milan was but the chief magistracy of the city, and could not pass by bequest. The Duke of Orleans, by his marriage with Valentina, sister of Filippo Maria, claimed to represent the Visconti house; but this was to regard Milan as a fief which passed through the female line. Finally, Frederick III. claimed that on the extinction of the Visconti house Milan, as an Imperial fief, reverted to the Emperor; but this dis-

Claimants  
for the  
Milanese.

<sup>1</sup> The life of Filippo Maria Visconti written by Piero Candido Decembrio, in Muratori, vol. xx., is one of the most characteristic works of the early Renaissance period in Italy.

regarded the fact that Milan, though nominally subject to the Empire, had been a free city for centuries before the Visconti made themselves its lords. The Milanese on their part did not consider themselves as belonging to any of these claimants. They had submitted to the rule of the great Visconti family, which had been closely connected with the past glories of their city. When that family came to an end they decided to go back to their position of an independent republic, and other cities in the dominions of the Visconti followed their example.

The new republics would clearly have enough to do to hold their own against these numerous claimants: but Venice, always jealous of its neighbours, saw in the difficulties of Milan its own opportunity. Engaged in war with Venice, Milan was driven to take into its service Francesco Sforza, who, with consummate sagacity, used the opportunity so offered.. He raised up in Milan a party favourable to himself; he won back towns from the Venetians, and garrisoned them with his own soldiers. He defeated Venice so that she was driven to sue for peace; then he suddenly changed sides, allied himself with the Venetians and advanced against Milan, which was unsuspecting and unprepared for a siege. In vain Venice, when it was too late, saw her mistake, made peace with Milan, and despatched an army against Sforza. Sforza, though suffering from famine almost as much as Milan, persisted in his blockade, and kept the Venetian troops at bay till the Milanese, in desperation, could endure no longer. Then, gathering all the food he could, he entered Milan, February 26, 1450, as the saviour, rather than the conqueror, of the people. He arranged that supplies should rapidly be brought into the city, and managed to present himself to the people as their benefactor. Admiration of his cleverness and prudence overcame all resentment of his treachery. His first measures were wise and conciliatory, and promised good government for the future. The Milanese soon admitted that one who could plot so skilfully was

Francesco  
Sforza be-  
comes lord  
of Milan.  
February,  
1450.

likely to rule with success. The condottiere general, the son of the peasant of Cotignola, took his place amongst the princes of Europe.

Nicolas V. was glad to see peace again restored in North Italy, and a power established which was strong enough to keep in check the ambition of Venice. Jubilee of 1450.

He took no part in the operations of the war. His pursuits were those of peace. He was busy in organising the Papal finances, and showed his gratitude for past favours to Cosimo de' Medici by making him his banker, a step which benefited the Papal treasury, and at the same time increased the prestige and credit of the great banking-house of the Medici. Otherwise Nicolas was employed in planning the restoration of the buildings of Rome, and in increasing the treasures of the Vatican Library. His object was to make Rome once more a fit residence for the Papacy, to restore its former splendour, and make it the literary and artistic capital of Europe. In 1450 Nicolas V. proclaimed a year of Jubilee. The schism was at an end, and since the first jubilee of Boniface VIII. there had not been in Rome an undisputed Pope to lend solemnity to the pilgrimage. Italy was peaceful, and access to Rome was free. Crowds of pilgrims from every land flocked to Rome, to the number of 40,000 in one day.<sup>1</sup> So great was the crowd returning one evening from S. Peter's that more than 200 persons were killed in the crush upon the bridge of S. Angelo, or were pushed into the water. Nicolas took care to prevent such an accident in the future by pulling down the houses which narrowed the approach to the bridge, and built a memorial chapel of marble to commemorate the calamity.

The arrangements for supplying food to this great multitude and for keeping order were excellent, and testified to the Pope's administrative skill. The offerings that flowed into the Papal treasury were large, and gave Nicolas V. the means of carrying out still

Negotiations for the marriage of Frederick III.

<sup>1</sup> *Æn. Syl., Hist. Fred.*, Kollar, ii., 172.

more splendidly his magnificent schemes of restoring the City of Rome—for which a new festival was in store, in the shape of an Imperial coronation. The peaceful settlement of North Italy promised Frederick III. an easy access to Rome, which he could never have won by his own arms. He was now thirty-five years old, and bethought himself of marriage, which he had never contemplated since the offer which Felix V. made him of his daughter. He sent two ambassadors to report on the ladies of royal birth who were eligible as wife of the King of the Romans, and finally fixed on Leonora, daughter of the King of Portugal and niece of Alfonso of Naples. Æneas Sylvius was sent to Naples to negotiate the marriage; and on his way thither received the news that Nicolas V. had conferred on him the bishopric of his native city of Siena. His business in Naples was successfully accomplished. Leonora, only fourteen years old, had other suitors, but she preferred Frederick III., for she rejoiced to be called Empress. ‘For the title of Emperor,’ says Æneas, ‘was held in more esteem abroad than at home.’<sup>1</sup> It was agreed that Frederick should meet his bride at some port in Italy, whence they should proceed to Rome for the coronation.

When this had been arranged, Æneas visited Rome at the end of 1450, and had an opportunity of conferring another service on the Pope. There was one shadow which still hung over Nicolas V.—the shadow of a future Council, which he had promised to the French King. French ambassadors were at Rome urging the fulfilment of the promise, and Æneas supplied the Pope with a means of shelving the matter. Nicolas V. had promised to hold a Council in France, if the other princes of Europe were willing. Æneas, in a speech before the Pope and Cardinals, announced the betrothal of Frederick and his approaching coronation. He then went on to demand, in Frederick’s name, a Council in Germany, as being

The Council in France deferred.

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 16.



the fittest land for such a purpose. Nicolas V. could answer the French ambassadors that the princes of Europe were not unanimous in consenting to a Council in France.<sup>1</sup> Again the cleverness of Æneas was found useful, and the unwelcome Council was dismissed for the present.

Æneas also suggested to the Pope that it would be well if Germany felt the influence of the religious spirit of Italy. In the manifold productiveness of the fifteenth century in Italy, the fervour of religious feeling had found some noble exponents. Chief of these was Bernardino, born in 1380 of a good family in Siena. He gave to the poor his patrimony and entered the Franciscan Order. Bernardino was filled with an enthusiasm for moral reform, and strove to bring back the Franciscan Order to original purity. He followed the example of its great founder, and, like Francis, went barefoot throughout Italy, preaching to the crowds who in every city thronged to hear him. Wherever he went he awakened the fervour of devotion, which at all times can be kindled among the masses into a transient flame. Æneas Sylvius, in his youth, was almost stirred to become a friar by Bernardino's eloquence, though his after-life does not show that the impression lasted long. The Emperor Sigismund, during his stay at Siena, delighted to listen to Bernardino's preaching, though he made little effort to give it any practical result. Bernardino preached the gospel of 'Christ and Him

Canonisation of Bernardino of Siena. 1450.

<sup>1</sup> This proceeding is somewhat obscure. Æneas (*Comm.*, p. 17) says: 'Concilium quod Galli petebant in Francia dissuasit'. Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, pp. 140 and 152, gives two speeches of Æneas, one previously printed in Freher, the other from a MS. at Lucca. In the first the demand is made for a Council in Germany, in the second the matter is not mentioned. Probably the first was what Æneas delivered; the second was what he had prepared, and the demand for the Council was inserted to suit the occasion. The ambassador of the Teutonic Order, quoted by Voigt, *Æn. Syl.*, ii., 20, mentions the demand for the Council, and Æneas, *Oratio adversus Australes*, in Mansi, i., 234, says: 'Neque Aragonum neque Angliæ regibus neque Portagalliæ placet in Gallia esse concilium. Ego quoque jussu Cæsaris in consistorio publico Romæ in fine anni jubilæi hanc celebrationem concilii non sine rationalibus causis dissuasi.'

crucified'. He attracted the attention of the crowd by displaying a wooden tablet emblazoned with the name of Jesus in letters of gold, and with loud cries and exhortations set it before them for worship. His success raised many enemies, who besought the Pope to silence the unseemly fanatic. But the Papacy was wise enough to countenance every religious movement that was not hostile to itself. Bernardino's teaching was examined and approved by Martin V. and Eugenius IV. The popular devotion found his sanctity attested by miracles. Even Æneas Sylvius saw him dispel by his prayers a storm that threatened to disturb his congregation. He died in 1444, and such was his reputation for holiness that he was canonised by Nicolas V. during the year of jubilee.<sup>1</sup>

Bernardino is said to have established by his exertions more than five hundred Franciscan monasteries in Italy. He had many followers, chief amongst whom was Giovanni of Capistrano, a village near Aquila. On him Bernardino's mantle fell, and at the suggestion of Æneas Sylvius he was sent by the Pope to evangelise Germany, and secure its allegiance to Rome. Great was the success of Capistrano in Vienna. From twenty to thirty thousand thronged daily to hear the preaching of the holy friar, though he spoke in Latin, and his words had to be translated into German by an interpreter. They revered him as though he were an Apostle, thronged round him to touch the hem of his garments, and brought their sick in multitudes that he might lay his hands upon them.

Capistrano's mission had, however, another object than merely to preach to the people of Vienna and reform Franciscan houses. It was hoped that his prestige would have some influence on Bohemia,

Fra Gio-  
vanni  
Capis-  
trano in  
Germany.  
  
Attitude  
of Bohe-  
mia.

<sup>1</sup> Æneas Sylvius gives an interesting account of him, *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 173. See also his life, *Acta Sanctorum*, May, vol. v. There is a modern life by Toussaint (Regensburg, 1873), more remarkable for its tendency to edification than for its historical value.

which had not ceased to be a trouble to the Papacy. It is true that the Catholic reaction had made huge strides under Sigismund, and great things were hoped from Albert II. But Albert's death left Bohemia with an infant king, and the national feeling against German interference revived during the minority. Rokycana returned to Prag and resumed his office as archbishop. The nation that had raised heroes like Zizka and Procopius the Great found in George Podiebrad a leader who had the wisdom to unite the nobles into a patriotic league, and pursue a policy of moderation to all parties in Church and State alike. The religious question in Bohemia was left more vague than ever by the dissolution of the Council of Basel. Nothing had been said about the Compacts in the final agreement between the Pope and the Council. The Compacts themselves had never received Papal ratification. It suited Nicolas V. to leave the matter open, behave with moderation, and neither accept nor repudiate the Compacts, but wait till an opportunity offered for ending the exceptional position which Bohemia still claimed for itself. Meanwhile, Capistrano tried the effects of his eloquence, Cusa of his learning, and Æneas Sylvius of his cleverness.

Besides the religious object of winning back the Hussites from their heresy, there was also the political motive of strengthening in Bohemia the party of Frederick III., and allowing him to proceed at leisure with his Italian journey. The Bohemians murmured against Frederick's guardianship of Ladislas, and demanded that their king should be given up to their own care. Frederick did not dare to leave his kingdom till he had taken some steps to secure quietness in Bohemia. Æneas Sylvius was sent as the head of a royal embassy to a Bohemian Diet, and we have a vivid picture drawn by his pen. He and his companions passed through Tabor, where they were hospitably received. As he entered the city gate he saw on either side of the archway a shield: one bore the Hussite symbol of an angel holding the cup, the other a

Æneas  
Sylvius in  
Bohemia.  
1451.

picture of the blind general Zizka. Æneas found that the old spirit still survived amid the rude dwellers in the mountain fastness. He was struck with holy horror at their disregard for ecclesiastical traditions. He had expected to find them orthodox except in the matter of the Communion under both kinds; he found them an entirely heretical and rebellious people. He left Tabor with the feelings of one who had escaped from the companionship of the ungodly, and advanced towards Prag. But the city was stricken by the plague, and the Diet adjourned to Beneschau, where Æneas discharged his mission. He besought the Diet to await peacefully the return of Frederick III. from Rome; Ladislav was yet too young to rule. The Diet was not contented with this vague assurance, and the rhetoric of Æneas could not convince them. But Æneas had better success in arranging matters with George Podiebrad, the Governor of Bohemia, whom he judged to be ambitious rather than misguided. He conferred with him about the religious troubles in Bohemia; each complained that the Compacts were not observed. Podiebrad demanded the recognition of Rokycana as archbishop; Æneas asserted that it was a breach of ecclesiastical order to compel the Pope to recognise as archbishop any one whom he deemed unfit.<sup>1</sup> No result came from the argument; but Æneas was satisfied that he had gauged Podiebrad's character and found him to be a harmless man who could be easily managed. On his return Æneas again passed through Tabor, and on this occasion the Bishop Niklas of Pilgram, with an attendant crowd of priests and scholars, came ready for a disputation with one who had a fame for learning. They were all well versed in Latin, and Æneas owns that the one good point about this perfidious race was its love for literature. The discussion was like most theological discussions—each side showed much learn-

<sup>1</sup> The letter of Æneas to Carvajal (No. 130, ed. Basel) gives a full account of the controversy, and throws much light on the religious condition of Bohemia.

ing and readiness. The Taborites urged the scriptural nature of their doctrine; Æneas pleaded the authority of the Church, and of the Pope, its earthly head. Yet Æneas managed to extract some humour out of the discussion. 'Why do you extol to us the Apostolic See?' said one of the disputants. 'We know the Pope and his Cardinals to be slaves of avarice and gluttony, whose god is their belly, and whose heaven is money.' The speaker was a round fat man. Æneas gently laid his hand upon his stomach. 'Is this,' said he, 'the result of fasting and abstinence?' There was a general laugh, and Æneas withdrew from the dispute. Not till he reached the Catholic city of Budweis did he breathe freely, and feel as if he had emerged from the infernal regions to the light of heaven. If Æneas had not converted the Bohemian heretics, nor convinced the Bohemian Diet, he, at least, obtained so much that Frederick III. recognised Podiebrad as Governor of Bohemia, and so procured peace with that realm during his Roman journey.

No sooner had Æneas returned to Vienna than he was again sent off to Italy to arrange for Frederick's coming, and receive his intended bride on her landing. Frederick prepared for his departure, and appointed regents during his absence. But when it was known that he intended to take with him the young Ladislas, the discontent of the barons of Austria broke out in revolt. Headed by Ulrich Eizinger, they formed a League, and demanded that Ladislas, their rightful king, should be given up to them. When Frederick refused, the League renounced allegiance to him, and took the government into its hands. Frederick's position was ignominious: he had no forces to send against them, and judged it better to leave Austria in revolt, and proceed with his Italian expedition. He spent Christmas at S. Veit in Carinthia, and on the last day of December, 1451, he entered Italian ground.

Frederick  
III. sets  
out for  
Italy. De-  
cember,  
1451.

Even in the person of the feeble Frederick III. the glamour of the Imperial title retained some power. When it was

known that he was actually coming to Italy, a certain amount of trepidation prevailed in the Italian cities. So evenly balanced was their constitutional mechanism that the slightest touch might incline it one way or another. Even Siena looked with suspicion on its bishop, Æneas Sylvius, lest he might use his influence with Frederick to seize the lordship of his native town. Much as Nicolas V. had desired an Imperial coronation at Rome, to give occasion for another festival, as well as to mark the close alliance between the Empire and the Papacy, he began to listen to the alarming hints which were poured into his ears. Frederick might plot against the peace of the Roman city; allied by his marriage with Alfonso of Naples, he might threaten the wealth of the Pope and Cardinals. If we are to believe Æneas Sylvius, it needed all his cleverness to reassure the Pope.<sup>1</sup>

Frederick advanced from Treviso through the Venetian territory. He did not think it wise, as Milan was in the hands of a usurper of the Imperial rights, to go to Milan to receive the iron crown of Lombardy. He was met near the Po by Borso, Marquis of Este, who received him on bended knees and escorted him to Ferrara. There Lodovico Gonzaga of Mantua came to welcome him, and Sforza's young son, Galeazzo Maria, brought a condescending invitation to Milan. From Ferrara Frederick journeyed to Bologna, where he was greeted by Cardinal Bessarion, the Papal legate. Thence he passed into Florence and saw with wonder the splendour of the city. Frederick was accompanied by his ward Ladislas, a boy of twelve, his brother Albert and a few bishops and smaller princes, with about 2000 horsemen. His advent in Italy had no political significance, but was merely an antiquarian pageant.

On February 2 came the news that Leonora, with her convoy, had arrived at Livorno. Æneas Sylvius was sent to meet her; but the punctilious ambassador of Portugal refused to give up his precious charge except to the Emperor himself. Æneas, on

Frederick  
III. at  
Siena.  
February,  
1452.

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 187.



his side, asserted the dignity of his mission. For fifteen days they wrangled, till the matter was submitted to Leonora, who professed herself obedient to the commands of her future lord. She was escorted, on February 24, to Siena, where Frederick was anxiously awaiting her. The Sieneſe marked by a ſtone pillar the exact ſpot where the Emperor firſt embraced his bride. The elegant feſtivities of the Sieneſe charmed Frederick as much as their ſcanty contribution of money diſpleaſed him. On March 1 he paſſed on to Viterbo, where ſome unruly ſpirits ſhewed their contempt for dignities by trying to catch with hooks the baldachin held over the Emperor that they might make booty of the rich ſtuff; then growing bolder, they made a ruſh for the trappings of Frederick's horſe. 'We muſt repel force by force,' he cried, and, ſeizing a lance from an attendant, he charged the mob. This was the beginning of an unſeemly brawl, in the miſt of which Frederick entered his lodging.

On March 8 the King and his attendants came in ſight of Rome. Frederick turned to Æneas, and ſaid prophetically, 'We are going to Rome—I ſeem to ſee you Cardinal and future Pope'. The Cardinals and nobles of Rome advanced to welcome Frederick, who, according to cuſtom, paſſed the night outside the walls. Nicolas V. was ſtill perturbed at the thoughts of his coming. Æneas went on before to aſſure him of the King's goodwill. 'I prefer the error of ſuſpicion rather than of over-confidence,' was the Pope's answer. Next day Frederick and Leonora entered Rome with pomp, and were eſcorted to S. Peter's, where the Pope awaited them in the porch ſeated in his chair. Frederick knelt and kiſſed the Pope's foot; then Nicolas roſe, offered him his hand to kiſſ, and kiſſed his cheek. The King preſented a maſſive piece of gold, took the accuſtomed oath of fidelity, and was led by the Pope into the church. Never before had there been ſuch friendly greeting between Pope and Emperor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Æn. Sylv., *Hist. Fred.*, 277, *Comment.*, 20; the deſcription by Goſwinus Mandocetes, the Papal ſinger, in Chmel's *Regesta*, Anhang, No. 98; *Hodæporicon* in Würdtwein, *Subſida*, xii., 10; Columbanus de Pontremulo, in Denis, *Cod. lib. Bibl. Cæs. Vindob.*, i., 517.

Nicolas V. proposed to defer the coronation till March 19, as being the anniversary of his own coronation as Pope. Frederick acceded to the Pope's wish ; but he did not care, meanwhile, to remain indoors at the Vatican, and scandalised the Romans by rambling about the city before his coronation, which was contrary to usage. He was greatly impressed by the old buildings of Rome, as well as by the restorations on which Nicolas V. was engaged. The Pope and the King conferred freely within the Vatican, and their alliance was confirmed by their mutual needs. Frederick wished the Pope to support him against the rebellious Austrians, and compel them to submit to his authority as guardian of the young Ladislas. Nicolas urged Frederick to use material weapons to bring into subjection a perfidious race which had favoured the conciliar movement, and was yet far from showing a proper obedience to the Papal commands. The league between Pope and Emperor was strengthened by these conferences, and Frederick besought the Pope to give an additional proof of his favour by conferring on him in Rome the crown of Lombardy, which he had not been able to receive at Monza. In spite of the protest of the Milanese ambassadors, Nicolas V., on March 16, performed this unprecedented act, and crowned Frederick King of the Romans, with the crown of Aachen, which had been brought for the purpose. On the same day the marriage of Frederick and Leonora was performed by the Pope. It was noticed that Ladislas had a place assigned him below most of the Cardinals, and some of the Cardinals had precedence over Frederick, who as yet only ranked as the German King.

At length, on March 19, the Imperial coronation was performed with due pomp and ceremony. Frederick first took the oath of obedience to the Pope, was made a canon of S. Peter's, and, with Leonora, received the unction at the hands of the Vice-Chancellor. The Pope said mass, and then placed in the Emperor's hands the golden sword, the apple, and the sceptre,

Nicolas V.  
and Frederick III.

Coronation of  
Frederick  
III. March  
19, 1452.

and on his head the crown. To make the ceremony more imposing, Frederick had fetched from Nürnberg the Imperial insignia of Charles the Great. Their venerable antiquity did not match the magnificent clothing of Frederick, and suggested the thought that his predecessor paid more attention to his actions than to his ornaments. The keen eye of Æneas Sylvius detected on the sword-blade the outlines of the Lion of Bohemia, which showed him that these insignia dated only from the times of Charles IV.<sup>1</sup> This spurious affectation of antiquity was an apt symbol of the Imperial claims and of the decrepitude of the Empire. It had grown in outward display in proportion as it had lost in real power. The Empire was but a reminiscence of the past; the Emperor was useful only as a figure in the pageant.

When the coronation was over, the Pope and the Emperor walked hand in hand to the door of S. Peter's. The Pope mounted his horse, and the Emperor held the reins for a few paces. Then he too mounted his steed, and Pope and Emperor rode together as far as the Church of S. Maria in Cosmedin. Nicolas then returned to the Vatican, and Frederick, according to ancient custom, dubbed knights on the Bridge of S. Angelo. More than three hundred received this distinction, many of them men of little worth, who excited the mockery even of Æneas Sylvius. A splendid dinner at the Lateran brought the day's festivities to an end.

When this important matter had been happily accomplished the Pope issued a series of Bulls in Frederick's favour. Some of the privileges so conferred were personal. He and a hundred persons, whom he might choose, were empowered to select their own confessor. He might have divine service performed for his benefit in a place which lay under an interdict; he might carry about with him an altar, at which a priest might say mass at any time; he and his guests might indulge in milk and eggs during times of fasting. Other rights of more importance were also conferred

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 292.

on Frederick, which tended to increase his power over the possessions of the Church in his own dominions. In case of need he might employ the services of unbelievers to help him in war; a provision which no doubt was meant to authorise him to use the troops of Bohemia against his Austrian subjects. To dower his daughters or for other grave necessities he might impose 'moderate taxes according to ancient custom' on the clergy of Austria. He was empowered to imprison and confiscate the goods of all spiritual persons who had joined the rebellion against his wardship of Ladislas. He might exercise the right of visitation over all the monasteries of Austria. He received a grant of a tenth from all the clerical revenues in the Empire—a grant without precedent, as no reason of an ecclesiastical character was alleged as a colourable pretext.<sup>1</sup> The Pope and the Emperor were bent upon pushing to the furthest point their victory over the party of reform. The German Church was helpless before them, and they saw no reason for sparing it.

All these advantages were prospective; but Frederick made money out of his coronation by selling at once patents of nobility. Titles of Imperial Count and Doctor were sold for moderate prices. The open and shameless greed of Frederick awoke the laughter of the wits of Rome.

From Rome Frederick III. went to Naples at Alfonso's request. He was received with much magnificence; the roads were strewn with fragrant flowers, and troops of boys and girls with graceful dance and song welcomed the Emperor and his bride. Alfonso promised to help Frederick to recover Milan; but Frederick's character was not warlike, and the fulfilment of the promise was little likely to be required. During Frederick's visit to Naples Æneas Sylvius stayed at Rome to keep watch over Ladislas. He was startled by a summons, in the dead of night, to visit the Pope, who had received intelligence of a plot to carry off Ladislas. Precautions were at once taken;

Frederick  
III. at  
Naples.

<sup>1</sup> These Bulls are all quoted in Chmel's *Regesta*, pp. 282, etc.

so suspicious was the Pope even of the Cardinals that he forbade them to invite Ladislas to hunting parties outside the city walls. Frederick on his return found Ladislas still safe. He stayed three days in Rome, and in a public consistory thanked the Pope for his magnificent reception. Æneas Sylvius delivered a speech in favour of a crusade against the Turks, and was pleased to think that his eloquence drew tears from his audience. On April 26 Frederick left Rome.

Frederick III. returned through Siena to Florence, where he received a letter from the combined Austrians, Hungarians, and Moravians threatening him with war unless he gave up Ladislas. Their deputies made a scheme for the escape of Ladislas, and tried to enlist the Florentines on their side; but again the plan was discovered in good time. In Florence Frederick assumed the character of a mediator in Italian affairs. As matters stood, Florence and Sforza were banded together against Naples and Venice, while the Pope was neutral. Frederick urged on the Florentines peace and goodwill towards Alfonso, and received an assurance of their peaceable intentions. To Florence also came an ambassador from Sforza, asking Frederick to invest him with the Duchy of Milan. Frederick did not refuse, but demanded a yearly tribute or the surrender of a part of the Milanese territory. Sforza, who had won his dominions by his sword, was not prepared to barter any part of them for a title, and the negotiations failed for the time.

At Ferrara, Frederick hoped to appear as arbiter of Italian affairs. Ambassadors from Florence, Venice, and Milan awaited him; but those of Naples tarried, and the scheme of a Congress came to nothing. The only display of his power which Frederick could make was the creation of Modena and Reggio into a duchy, and the investiture therewith of Borso of Este. On May 21 Frederick entered Venice, and again tried to interpose his good offices to mediate peace between Milan and the republic. 'We know

Departure  
of Fred-  
erick III.  
from Italy.



that we speak with the Emperor,' was the answer of the doge Foscari, 'and therefore we stated our intentions at first; our answer, once given, cannot be changed.' Frederick was reminded of his powerlessness in Italy. He showed his true character to the Venetians by wandering about privately in ordinary attire to the shops, that he might make better bargains for the articles of luxury which Venice temptingly displayed to the needy German. On June 2 he left Venice. His pleasant journey in Italy was at an end, and he had to prepare to face his rebellious people, whom he had so lightly left to their own devices.

The Roman journey of Frederick was indeed sufficiently ignoble. 'Other emperors,' says a German chronicler, 'won their crown by arms; Sigismund and Frederick seemed to have begged it.'<sup>1</sup> 'He had neither sense nor wisdom,' says the gentle Archbishop of Florence, 'but all men saw the greed with which he looked for presents, and the joy with which he received them.'<sup>2</sup> Poggio judged him to be only a doll of an emperor, before whom it was useless to make a speech, as he would neither understand it nor pay for it.<sup>3</sup> Frederick was looked upon as a mere figure in an antiquated ceremony, and his personal qualities were not such as to win any respect from the cultivated Italians. The sole result of his expedition was to show clearly the selfish nature of the alliance between Pope and Emperor. Nicolas V. was bent only on identifying the Papacy with the glories of Italian culture, and asserting Italian supremacy over the ruder peoples of Germany. Frederick III. had no higher object than to extend his power over his ancestral dominions, and retain his influence over the kingdoms of Ladislas. The clear vision of real statesmanship was wanting to both. The danger from the Turkish inroads was a real question on which Europe might have been united. Union, however, is only possible under

Results of  
Frederick  
III.'s  
journey.

<sup>1</sup> Mathias Döring, in Mencken, iii., 18.

<sup>2</sup> S. Antoninus, *Chronicon*, iii., xxii., ch. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Poggio, letter 80 in *Spicilegium Romanum*, x.



trustworthy leaders. The restored Papacy had done nothing to redress the grievances of which Germany complained; the Emperor, who trusted to the Pope's help to maintain his position in Germany, was no fitting exponent of the national feeling.

When Frederick returned he found Austria under Eizinger, Hungary under Hunyadi, even Bohemia under Podiebrad, and the chief nobles of Moravia banded together against him. They demanded that their king, Ladislas, should be admitted to reign over his ancestral kingdoms; but this was only a demand for their own freedom from Frederick's control. No sooner had Frederick left Rome than an embassy from his rebellious subjects appeared to plead their cause before the Pope. The answer of Nicolas was that they must obey the Emperor. They requested that the excommunication, which had been threatened against their disobedience, should be withdrawn. 'This is a temporal, not a spiritual matter,' said one of them; 'it is not in your province.' Nicolas angrily answered that all causes were subject to the judgment of the Apostolic See; the Austrians must either obey, or they would be excommunicated. The envoys hastily left Rome, and scarcely thought themselves safe till they were out of Italy. They brought back news that the Pope was altogether on Frederick's side, and was opposed to the national cause.<sup>1</sup> On April 4 Nicolas issued a threat of excommunication against Eizinger and his followers,<sup>2</sup> and wrote to Hunyadi and Podiebrad, charging them to give the Austrians no help.

Frederick III., at the end of June, boldly entered Neustadt, and tried to gather around him his partisans. He trusted to the effects of the Pope's letter, which he sent for publication on all sides. But the Bishop of Salzburg would not allow it to be published; the Canons of Passau mocked at it; the Viennese threw the bearer of it into prison, and

<sup>1</sup> *Æn. Sylv., Hist. Fred., in Kollar, ii., 340.*

<sup>2</sup> *Raynaldus, 1452, 7.*

the theologians of the University drew up a formal protest, in which they appealed from an ill-instructed Pope to one better instructed, or to a General Council. They asserted that Nicolas V. had usurped the place of Felix V., and professed themselves ready to join with the French to procure a future Council.

Frederick III. was soon besieged in Neustadt, and had no stomach for the fight. When he saw that his adversaries paid no heed to the Pope, he turned to more pacific counsels. Æneas Sylvius plausibly urged that, after all, Ladislus could not be kept in wardship for ever. Frederick was driven to hold a conference with Eizinger on September 2, and submit to conditions which the Markgraf of Baden and the bishops negotiated. He agreed to hand over Ladislus to the Count of Cilly, on condition that the Austrian troops were withdrawn; the other matters in dispute were to be decided in a Diet to be held at Vienna. On September 4 Ladislus was given up to the Count of Cilly, who, in spite of the previous understanding that nothing was to be done till the meeting of the Diet, took the youth to Vienna, where he was received with triumph. The Bohemians negotiated with him that, before acknowledging him for their king, he should ratify the Compacts and accept the nomination of Rokycana as archbishop.

The Diet was fixed for November 12, but it was not till after Christmas that Frederick sent his three envoys, headed by Æneas Sylvius. At Vienna were the Dukes Lewis and Otto of Bavaria, William of Saxony, Albert of Austria, Charles of Baden, and Albert of Brandenburg, with representatives of other princes, and deputies from Hungary, Bohemia, and Moravia. Albert of Brandenburg insisted that a dispute between himself and the city of Nürnberg, which had been long pending, should first be settled. He refused to accept any decision but the Emperor's, and drew the princes after him to Neustadt. The Diet seemed likely to break up at once, as the Imperial

Submis-  
sion of  
Frederick  
III.  
Septem-  
ber, 1452.

Diet of  
Vienna.  
Decem-  
ber, 1452—  
April, 1453.

envoys were driven to follow Albert. In vain Frederick endeavoured to put off the decision: Albert was violent, and would not be refused. While Frederick was taking counsel with Cusa, the Pope's legate, Æneas, and the Bishop of Eichstadt, Albert burst into the room, and rated Æneas and the rest, exclaiming loudly that he cared neither for Emperor nor Pope. Æneas sadly remarks that princes, being brought up amongst their inferiors, rarely know how to behave towards their equals, but lose their temper and behave with violence.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor was driven to hear the case. Gregory Heimburg, on behalf of the citizens of Nürnberg, spoke with warmth and justice of the wrong that would be done, if princes closely allied with Albert sat to judge a cause in which he was a party. The Emperor was in a sore strait. He did not wish to alienate the cities by assenting to a notoriously partial judgment against Nürnberg; but he was powerless to withstand Albert and his confederates. He bade one of his counsellors collect the opinions of the princes; Albert took him by the coat and thrust him to the door, saying, 'Are you a prince, that you mix with princes?' Frederick did not even venture to raise his voice against this act of insolence. Still the pleading of Heimburg seems to have produced some impression, and Æneas managed to have the final decision of the case deferred to inquire into a technical point which Heimburg had raised. Albert was left in possession of the castles which he had seized, and the Emperor was spared the shame which would otherwise have fallen upon him.

This preliminary scene gave the Imperial envoys no hopes of any help from the German princes in the proceedings of the Diet at Vienna. The Austrians, who felt that they were masters of the situation as against the feeble Emperor, did not much wish for any settlement of the matters in dispute. They urged that

Speech of  
Æneas  
Sylvius,  
'Adversus  
Australes'.

<sup>1</sup> 'Hoc est principum commune vitium; nutriti namque inter minores, qui cuncta laudare solent quæ dicuntur ab eis, cum ad extraneos sibi que pares veniunt, furunt atque insaniunt ubi se reprehensos intelligunt.'—*Hist. Fred.*, 417.

the time fixed for the Diet was now past, and that their agreement had consequently lapsed. They raised every kind of difficulty, and negotiations proceeded slowly. In the course of these proceedings Æneas Sylvius delivered his most effective speech 'Against the Austrians,'<sup>1</sup> in which he defended the conduct of the Emperor in his wardship of Ladislas, justified the interference of the Pope, and defended the Papal power against the attacks of the Viennese University. 'The Austrians,' he said, 'exclaim with haughty mien, "What have we to do with the Pope? Let him say his masses, we will handle arms; if he lays his commands on us we will appeal." The Waldensian heretics, the Saracens themselves, could not say more.' He proceeded to examine the grounds of an appeal to a future Council. The decrees of Constance recognise, as questions to be submitted to a Council, the case as of heresy, schism, or grievous scandal caused by the Pope to the Universal Church; such 'grievous scandal' meant some change made by a Pope in ecclesiastical usage, such as allowing priests to marry, pronouncing judgment of death, or alteration of ritual against the wish of the community of the faithful. Æneas had forgotten much that he had urged at Basel; he had nothing to say against simony, oppression of the Church, or refusal to accept the conciliar principle. He scoffed at the Councils of Constance and Basel—they were tumultuous and disorderly. 'I saw at Basel cooks and grooms sitting side by side with bishops. Who would give their doings the force of law?'—'But the Austrians appeal from an uninstructed to an instructed Pope. What a wonderful thing is wisdom! What a splendid procedure they suggest! The person of the Pope is divided into him from whom an appeal is made and him to whom it is made! Such a scheme might suit Plato's ideal State, but could be found nowhere else. They add to this an appeal to a future Council, which, they say, is due according to the Constance decrees within ten years of the dissolution

<sup>1</sup> In Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, i., 184, etc.

of that of Basel. I am afraid it will be twenty or a hundred years before a Council is held ; since its summons depends on the judgment of the Pope as to its opportuneness. If they expect one from the Savoyards' (so he calls the party of Basel), 'it is absurd for them to talk of Councils every ten years, when the last sat for nearly twenty. Would that the times were favourable to a Council, as the Pope wishes ; it would soon dispel the folly of these dreams. But they appeal to the Universal Church, *i.e.*, the congregation of all faithful people, high and low, men and women, clergy and lay. In early days, when the believers were few, such an assembly was possible ; now it is impossible that it should come together, or appoint a judge to settle any cause. It were as wise to appeal to the judgment of the Last Great Day.'

The arguments of Æneas represent the position of the restored Papacy ; and it cannot be denied that the scorn of Æneas was rightly exercised upon the unwieldy mechanism of the conciliar system, whose logical claims could scarcely be put fittingly into action. For his immediate purpose, the speech of Æneas produced no result. The princes sided with the Austrians in refusing to open for discussion the general question of their relations to Frederick. The only points that the Diet would consider were those referring to details. It was taken for granted that Frederick's wardship had actually come to an end. The question for decision was the claims that arose in consequence. Frederick had to submit his accounts, and the points which the princes were prepared to settle were, how much he had spent, and how much was due. Austrian castles had been pledged by the Emperor : who was to be held responsible for redeeming them ? There was much discussion, but at last the princes agreed on what they considered fair conditions. The Imperial envoys refused to accept them ; whereon the princes again went to Frederick at Neustadt. Albert of Brandenburg told the Emperor that he would get nothing more : he must accept these conditions or prepare for war. The princes

then departed and left Frederick to his fate. Frederick was obliged to give way; even then the conditions were not signed by his opponents, as the Count of Cilly, who was now master of Ladislas, preferred to keep the matter open.

Thus Frederick's league with the Pope had not been able to save him from the direst humiliation. At the beginning of April, 1453, the Emperor, who had been received with such pomp in Rome, was left master only of his own lands of Carinthia and Styria. His influence over Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, and Moravia was gone, and he was powerless in Germany. The Papacy, having allied itself with the Empire, shared its humiliation. The threat of excommunication had been openly defied, and Ladislas was willing to negotiate with the French King for the summons of a Council. At Frederick's request the Pope recalled his admonition to the Austrians.<sup>1</sup> Germany had not been subdued by the first exercise which the Pope made of his newly-restored power.

<sup>1</sup> Voigt, *Ænea Sylvio de' Piccolomini*, ii., 88, from unpublished letters of Æneas at Vienna.

Failure of  
the league  
between  
Pope and  
Emperor.



## CHAPTER III.

## NICOLAS V. AND THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

1453—1455.

IF Nicolas V. was humiliated at Vienna, he was about the same time profoundly afflicted by occurrences at Rome. He was sincere in his wish to promote peace in Italy; he was most desirous to gain the affection of the Roman people, whom he enriched by the jubilee and gratified by the imposing ceremony of an Imperial coronation. Above all, he had shown his desire to associate the city of Rome with the glories of the revived Papacy by the magnificence of the public works in which he was engaged. Others might have grievances to allege: surely the Roman citizens had no reason to look upon the Pope in any other light than a splendid benefactor. Yet, at the beginning of 1453, Nicolas V. learned to his amazement that a dangerous plot against his personal safety was formed within the walls of Rome.

Nicolas V.  
and the  
Romans.

The revival of classical learning in Italy had developed a tendency towards republicanism; and though the movement of the Roman citizens had been checked by the neighbourhood of the King of Naples at the time of the election of Nicolas V., the spirit that had then inspired it still survived. Nicolas V. had not thought it wise to take any severe measures to assure the Papal Government. He trusted to his own good intentions to overcome the opposition that had been threatened. The republican ringleader, Stefano Porcaro, was sent into honourable exile, as Podestà of Anagni. But when his period of

Plot of  
Stefano  
Porcaro,  
January,  
1453.

office expired, Porcaro returned to Rome to play the part of demagogue. Taking advantage of a tumult that arose at the carnival, he again raised the cry of 'Liberty' amongst the excited crowd. Nicolas V. thought it better to remove such a firebrand from Rome, and Porcaro was exiled to Bologna, where he enjoyed perfect freedom on condition that he showed himself every day to the Legate, Cardinal Bessarion. But Porcaro's dreams had possessed his imagination too deeply to be dispelled by any show of clemency, and the desire to appear as the liberator of his country became more and more rooted in his mind. From Bologna he managed to contrive a plot against the Pope, and to assure himself of many confederates. His nephew, Sciarra Porcaro, gathered together a band of 300 armed men, who were to be the chief agents in the rising. Their scheme was to take advantage of the solemnity of the Festival of the Epiphany, and while the Pope and Cardinals were at mass in S. Peter's, set fire to the Papal stables, and, in the confusion, seize the Pope and his brother, who was captain of the Castle of S. Angelo. While one band seized the Castle, another, at the same time, was to occupy the Capitol. The booty of the Pope and Cardinals, which they estimated at 700,000 ducats, would give them means to carry out their plan of abolishing the Papal rule and securing a Roman Republic. The aspirations of Petrarch, the dreams of Rienzi, were at last to be realised.

When all was ready, Porcaro left Bologna on the night of December 26, 1452, and four days after reached Rome, where he hid himself in the house of a kinsman. The conspirators were summoned to a banquet, in the midst of which Porcaro appeared, clad in a dress of gold brocade, and incited them to their great enterprise. Delay was fatal to the success of his plan. Messengers came from Bessarion bringing the news of Porcaro's flight from Bologna. The armed men of his nephew caused suspicion by an encounter with the police. Some of the conspirators gave information to the Senator and Cardinal Capranica. Porcaro's house was

watched by night, and the presence of the conspirators was detected. On the morning of January 4, the Senator, with fifty soldiers, surrounded the house. Sciarra Porcaro, with four comrades, cut his way through the soldiers and escaped from Rome. Stefano's courage deserted him; he did not dare to follow his nephew, but abandoned his confederates, and, through a back door, made his escape to the house of a sister. Meanwhile, the Papal Vice-Chamberlain addressed the people in the Capitol, accused Porcaro of sedition and ingratitude, pronounced the ban against him, and offered a reward to any who should deliver him up, alive or dead. His sister's house was no safe place of hiding, and by her advice he went with a friend by night to beg a refuge from the generosity of Cardinal Orsini. His friend, who went first to plead his cause, was made prisoner; when he did not return, Porcaro fled to the house of another sister, where he was followed. His sister hid him in a box, and tried to avoid detection by seating herself on the lid; but it was in vain. His hiding-place was discovered; he was carried off to the Castle of S. Angelo, and after a summary trial was beheaded on the morning of January 9. He died bravely, and his last words were: 'People, to-day dies the liberator of your country'.<sup>1</sup> On the same day nine others followed him to the gallows. Nicolas V. sent throughout Italy to discover those who had escaped, and Sciarra Porcaro was put to death at Città di Castello before the end of the month. If Nicolas had been gentle at first he showed himself relentless in his fright. One culprit's life was granted to the entreaties of the Cardinal of Metz; but next day Nicolas withdrew his promise, and the prisoner was put to death.<sup>2</sup>

The Pope and the Curia were alike filled with alarm at the discovery of this determined scheme. They did not know how far it represented any plan concerted with the other powers of Italy. Naples, Florence, Milan,

Judgments on  
Porcaro.

<sup>1</sup> Infessura, in Mur., iii., 2, 1135.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Florence of January 16, in Tommasini, *Documenti relativi a Stefano Porcari*, 45.

and Venice all might have some share in this desperate attempt to overthrow the Papacy and seize its revenues. Nicolas was full of suspicion, and fell into cruelty which was alien from his character. It was a bitter blow to him that enemies should rise up against him in his own city. The plot of Porcaro permanently disturbed his peace of mind. He grew morose and suspicious, denied access to his presence, and placed guards around his person. Porcaro's plot revealed to him the incompatibility of the Papal rule with the aspirations after freedom which the Romans nourished. The judgments of contemporaries differed as they fixed their eye on the glories of the Papacy or of the Roman city. 'Porcaro,' says the Roman Infessura, 'was a worthy man who loved his country, and sacrificed his life because, when banished without cause from the city, he wished to free her from slavery.' On the other hand, the men of letters whom the Pope's liberality had gathered to Rome cannot find language strong enough to express their horror at the monstrosity of Porcaro's plan, which seemed to them to be a rising of barbarism against culture, of Roman ruffians against the scholars who graced their city by their presence.<sup>1</sup> Both judgments contain some truth; but the difference which underlies them is still irreconcilable. Rome had many advantages conferred upon it as the seat of the Papal power, the capital of Christendom; it had in the Pope a munificent lord, and shared the benefits of his greatness. But it had to pay the price of isolation from the political life of Italy. There were always those who felt that they were citizens in the first place and churchmen afterwards, and who aspired to recover for their city the political independence of which the Papal rule deprived it.

Nicolas V. was enfeebled in health by the pains of gout as well as by his disappointments. A still heavier blow fell on him when the news reached Rome that on May 29 Mahomet II. had made himself master of Constantinople.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Infessura, 1134, with Alberti, Mur., xxv., 313, and Peter de Godis, *Dialogon*, ed. Perlbach.

It might seem that no one, who had noticed the rapid advance of the Turks, could doubt that the fall of Constantinople was imminent; yet Western Europe was entirely unprepared for such an event. Men looked round with shame and alarm when it actually took place. They felt shame that nothing had been done to save from the unbelievers the relics of an ancient and venerable civilisation; they felt alarm when the bulwark was removed which had so long stood between Europe and the Eastern tribes. It was natural that they should ask themselves what had been done by the heads of Christendom, the Pope, and the Emperor, to avert this calamity. It was natural that Nicolas V. should feel that the glories of his pontificate had been obscured by the mishap that in his days such a disaster had occurred. It was true that the Greeks had not maintained the union of the Churches which had been ratified at Florence. It was true that Nicolas had urged upon them the necessity of so doing as a first step towards obtaining help from Europe. It was true that the fanaticism of the Greeks refused to seek for help on the condition of submitting to the Azymites. Still the fact remained that Constantinople had fallen, and the Turks had gained a foothold in Europe.

Capture of Constantinople by the Turks. May, 1453.

Yet Nicolas V. had not been entirely neglectful. In answer to the entreaties of Constantine Palæologos, he had sent Cardinal Isidore of Russia to commemorate the reconciliation of the two Churches. In December, 1452, a solemn service was held in S. Sophia, and amid the muttered execrations of the Greeks the formality of a religious agreement was again performed. Nicolas prepared to send succours to his ally, and twenty-nine galleys were equipped for the purpose; but Mahomet II. began the siege of the doomed city unexpectedly, and pressed it with appalling vigour. The Papal vessels arrived off Eubœa two days after the fall of Constantinople, and through some mishap were captured unawares by the Turks.<sup>1</sup>

Help given by Nicolas V. to the Greeks.

<sup>1</sup> *Æn. Syl., Epist.*, 155, ed. Basel.

Cardinal Isidore with difficulty escaped in disguise, and made his way back to his own land, while the Greek Emperor Constantine Palæologos fell boldly fighting against the invader.

If Nicolas V. could plead that he had been willing to do what he could to avert this catastrophe, no such plea could be urged by the Emperor, who, says a German chronicler, 'sat idly at home planting his garden and catching birds'.<sup>1</sup> Yet Frederick III. wept to hear the news, and wrote to the Pope urging him to rouse Europe to a crusade. Everywhere a wail of sorrow was raised. Not only was the sentiment of Europe outraged by the fall of Constantinople and the forcible entrance of a new religion into the domains of Christendom, but commercial communications with the East were checked, and there was an uneasy feeling of dread how far the Turkish power might push its borders in Europe. Moreover, the blow affected not only the political, but also the literary sentiment of Europe. Greece, which was the home of Thucydides and Aristotle—Greece, to whose literature men were turning with growing delight and admiration, was abandoned in her last hour by those who owed her so deep a debt of gratitude. The literary treasures of Constantinople were dispersed, and no man could say how great had been the loss. 'How many names of mighty men will perish,' exclaims Æneas Sylvius in a letter to the Pope. 'It is a second death to Homer and to Plato. The fount of the Muses is stopped.'<sup>2</sup>

In the same letter Æneas goes on to depict truly enough the change which the fall of Constantinople had wrought in the historical position of the Papacy of Nicolas V. 'Historians of the Roman Pontiffs, when they reach your time, will write: "Nicolas V., a Tuscan, was Pope for so many years. He recovered the patrimony of the Church from the hands of tyrants; he gave union to the divided Church; he canonised Bernardino of Siena; he

Effects of  
the news  
on Euro-  
pean  
sentiment.

Effects on  
Nicolas V.

<sup>1</sup> Mathias Döring, in Mencken, iii., 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.*, 162, ed. Basel; the letter is dated July 12, 1453.



built the Vatican and splendidly restored S. Peter's; he celebrated the Jubilee, and crowned Frederick III." All this will be glorious to your fame, but will be obscured by the doleful addition: "In his time Constantinople was taken and plundered (or, it may be, burnt and razed) by the Turks". So your fame will suffer without any fault of yours. For, though you laboured with all your might to aid the unhappy city, yet you could not persuade the princes of Christendom to join in a common enterprise in defence of the faith. They said that the danger was not so great as was reported, that the Greeks exaggerated and trumped up stories to help them in begging for money. Your Holiness did what you could, and no blame can justly attach to you. Yet the ignorance of posterity will blame you when it hears that in your time Constantinople was lost.'

Nor was Æneas solitary in his utterances. Isidore of Russia, Bessarion, the Archbishop of Mitylene, and many others wrote in the same strain. There was no lack of writing either then or for many years later. But even without admonition from others the course of the Pope was clear. He must make amends for the past by putting himself at the head of Europe; and it was lucky for the Papacy to have a cry which might once more gather Christendom around it. On September 29 Nicolas issued a summons to a crusade, in which, after denouncing Mahomet II. as the dragon of the Apocalypse, he called on all Christian princes, in virtue of their baptismal vow, to take up arms against the Turks. He declared remission of sins to all who, for six months from the 1st of February next, persevered in the work of the crusade or sent a soldier in their stead; he dedicated to the service of the crusade all the revenues which came to the Apostolic See, or to the Curia, from benefices of any kind; he exacted from all the clergy a tithe of their ecclesiastical revenues, and proclaimed universal peace, that all might devote themselves to this holy purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Nicolas V.  
proclaims  
a crusade.  
September,  
1453.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, 1453, 9.

The Pope's words and promises were weighty enough ; but there were grave difficulties in giving them any practical effect. The state of Europe was by no means peaceful, nor were men's minds turned in the direction of a crusade. The old ideal of Christendom had grown antiquated ; the Emperor was a poor representative of united Europe. The Holy Roman Empire had been the symbol of a central organisation which was to keep in order the anarchic tendencies of feudalism. But feudalism, which was founded upon actual facts, had prevailed over a system which rested only upon an idea ; and the anarchy caused by feudalism had made national monarchies a necessity. The fifteenth century was the period when national monarchies were engaged in making good their position against feudalism. In France Charles VII. was asserting the power of the restored monarchy against the mighty Duke of Burgundy. England was intent on the desperate struggle of parties which ended in the Wars of the Roses. The Spanish kingdoms, jealous of one another, could urge their crusade against the Mussulman at home as a reason for not going abroad. In Germany each prince was engaged in consolidating his own dominions, and the feebleness of the Emperor made him more keen to use the opportunity offered. Poland was at enmity with the Teutonic Knights. Hungary and Bohemia were bent on maintaining their nationality against their German king. It was difficult to combine for united action this chaos of contending interests.

It was natural for the Pope to begin at home, and first to pacify Italy, 'an object which at his accession he had generally professed, but which on reflection he deferred till a more convenient season. He was anxious, above all things, to be at peace himself, to maintain tranquillity in the States of the Church, and to gratify his passion for restoring the buildings of Rome. He saw that he would be most powerful when the rest of Italy was weak, and that the States of the Church would be most secure when there were other objects for the ambition of

Political  
condition  
of Europe.  
1453.

Peace of  
Lodi. Ap-  
ril, 1454.

the Italian powers.<sup>1</sup> Even now the same motives weighed with him, and he was only half-hearted in his attempts to heal the breaches of Italy, where Alfonso of Naples, in alliance with Venice, still contested the duchy of Milan with Sforza, who was helped by Florence. He summoned ambassadors of these States to Rome, but in the discussions that arose was so careful to please everybody, and commit himself to nothing, that his sincerity was suspected,<sup>2</sup> and after some months of conference the ambassadors left Rome without arriving at any conclusions. To the shame of Nicolas V., the work which he had been too half-hearted to undertake was accomplished by an Augustinian monk, Fra Simonetto of Camerino,<sup>3</sup> who secretly negotiated peace between Sforza and Venice. The peace was published at Lodi on April 9, 1454, and in the following August Florence also accepted it. When matters had gone so far the Pope sent Cardinal Capranica to exhort Alfonso of Naples to join it also. After some difficulty Alfonso, on January 26, 1455, agreed to the pacification of Lodi, excepting only Genoa from its provisions, and a solemn peace for twenty-five years was established amongst all the Italian powers.

Meanwhile efforts were being made under the auspices of the feeble Frederick III. for a demonstration of unanimity on the part of the powers of Europe. At the end of December, 1453, the Bishop of Pavia, as Papal legate, arrived at Neustadt, and the Emperor issued invitations for a European Congress to be held at Regensburg on April 23, 1454. He promised to be present in person unless hindered by some serious business.

Prepara-  
tions of  
Germany  
for a  
crusade.  
1454.

<sup>1</sup> Manetti, *Vita Nicolai V.*, in Mur., iii., pt. 2, 943: 'Bella enim inter predictos totius pæne Italiæ principes ecclesiæ suæ pacem, concordiam vero illorum versa vice bellum ecclesiæ, non solum verisimilibus conjecturis sed certis et expressis argumentis et experientia quoque, rerum magistra, intelligebat'.

<sup>2</sup> Manetti: 'Cum tepide in hoc pacis tractatu, ne dicam frigide, sese gereret'.

<sup>3</sup> 'Hominem haud magnæ doctrinæ sed fidei plenum,' says Simoneta, *Vita Fr. Sfortiæ*, Muratori, xxi., 666.

But as the time drew nigh Frederick discovered that there were hindrances enough to keep him at home. He had no money; he was afraid lest Austria or Hungary might attack his domains if he left them unprotected; he did not wish to face the Electors, lest under the cover of reforms in the Empire they should still more diminish the Imperial power. 'It is hard,' he said to his counsellors, who urged him to go, 'it is hard to take care of the common good at one's own cost. I do not see any one who will study the benefit of others more than his own.'<sup>1</sup> So Frederick resolved to stay at home, and send in his stead an embassy, of which Æneas Sylvius was a member. He nominated also as his representatives such of the Electors and princes as he thought friendly to himself, amongst others Lewis of Bavaria, whom Æneas on his way met at Burghausen on the Inn. When Æneas gave him the Emperor's commission, Lewis answered that, though sensible of the compliment, he feared that his own youth and inexperience rendered him unfit for the task; he would probably send representatives to Regensburg. While he spoke the dogs were barking, and a band of huntsmen were impatiently waiting for the Duke, and cursing the Imperial envoys for causing a delay. Lewis graciously invited the envoys to follow the hunt, and when they declined rode off with his friends. This was not the spirit of a crusader, and it was but a sample of the attitude of the German princes towards the great question which they professed to consider seriously.

At the period fixed for the Congress only the Imperial presidents and the Papal legate had arrived. Cardinal Cusa, one of those who had been appointed by Frederick III., advanced to the neighbourhood of Regensburg, and then wrote to his colleagues to know if he should come any farther, and to ask who would pay his expenses. When this was the zeal displayed by a prince of the Church, we cannot wonder that the secular

Congress  
at Regens-  
burg.  
April,  
1454.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Syl., *De Ratisponensi Dieta*, in Mansi, *Orationes*, iii., 9.

princes did not bestir themselves more eagerly. From Italy no one came except the Papal legate, the Bishop of Pavia. Venice sent ambassadors, but they only entered Germany after the Congress was over. Florence and Lucca excused themselves as being engaged with other matters. Borso, the newly made Duke of Modena, was not sure enough of the peace of Lodi to think of anything save Italian complications. Siena did not receive the summons in time to attend to it. The letter to Lodovico of Mantua had been by mistake addressed to his brother Carlo. The other Italian States sent neither excuses nor representatives. The summons addressed to the Kings of France, England, Scotland, Hungary, Poland, and Denmark had been of the nature of a brotherly invitation; but none of them were inclined to show complaisance to the feeble Emperor. Charles VII. of France did not wish to seem to act in concert with Frederick. He wrote to the Pope, and said that he was willing to take up arms if the German princes on their part agreed to do so. Christian of Denmark wrote to express his sorrow that the shortness of notice and an expedition in which he was engaged against Norway prevented him from sending ambassadors, but he was willing to do what he could when the time for action arrived.<sup>1</sup> The Kings of England and Scotland paid no heed. Ladislas of Hungary and Bohemia was expected, but never came. Casimir of Poland alone sent representatives; but they came to complain of the Teutonic Knights.

It was no wonder that the foreign powers showed little zeal when Frederick himself stayed at home, and only three of the Electors sent ambassadors. Every one was suspicious, and there was no real union. Frederick had urged the Pope to join with him in issuing a summons to the German princes; but Nicolas V. was afraid to give any countenance to the Congress, lest it might be turned into a

<sup>1</sup> His letter is in *Æneas Sylvius, Op.*, ed. Basel, p. 658.



Council. The remembrance of Basel was still too vivid for the Pope to run any risk of its revival.<sup>1</sup>

As the presidents sat at Regensburg, somewhat embarrassed how to proceed, a rumour reached them, which at first seemed like a dream, that the Duke of Burgundy was on his way and had reached Constance. When it was known that he had actually arrived at Ulm, they wrote to Frederick begging him to come in person and welcome one who was as powerful as a king. In truth, Philip of Burgundy, who, besides Burgundy and Franche Comté, ruled over the rich lands between the Somme and the Meuse, was one of the most powerful princes in Christendom, and was a thorn in the side of the French King. He was by birth connected with the crusading movement; for his father was taken prisoner by the Turks at the battle of Nicopolis where Sigismund was defeated. He was now the heir of his father's policy, and had just succeeded in reducing under his sway the independence of the Flemish cities. Rich and magnificent, he put the French King to shame, and was the ideal of European chivalry. It was a gross and fantastic chivalry, much given to tournaments and festivals of every sort, yet not without its culture, as the paintings of John van Eyck still witness. Philip's proceedings in defence of Christendom are characteristic of the man and of the time. When he received the Pope's letter proclaiming a crusade, he held high festival at Lille—a festival adorned with all the sumptuous grandeur of Flemish pageantry. After a banquet, in which figured a party containing twenty-eight men playing on musical instruments, an elephant was led into the hall by a Saracen giant. On its back was a tower, in which sat a captive nun, representing the Church, who wept and implored succour. Two lovely maidens advanced

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Syl., *De Ratisponensi Dieta*, 4: 'Ea res Apostolicæ Sedi non placuit; quia fortasse latere dolos sub ea vocatione Nicolaus timuit; nihil est enim in alto sedenti tutum. Magni conventus magnos motus pariunt; inimica est novitatum summa potestas; spes mutationis enutrit miseros.'



with a live pheasant, and the Duke, laying his hand upon it, swore on the pheasant that he would drive out the Turk from Europe. His guests followed his example, and a splendid ball was the appropriate exploit which immediately followed.<sup>1</sup>

The news of Philip's approach to Regensburg caused the utmost excitement. Everywhere he was received with honour, and rumour was rife with the causes of his coming. Some said that he wished to win over the Germans, and was ambitious of the Imperial crown; others that he hoped to prevail on the Emperor to erect Brabant, Holland, and Zeeland into a kingdom, that he might bear a royal title. Anyhow, his coming brought prestige to the Congress. It impelled the Cardinal of S. Peter's to hasten to Regensburg without waiting to have the question of his expenses further settled. Lewis of Bavaria left his hunting, and went to meet Philip; he sent also four envoys to Regensburg, but declined to act personally as one of the Emperor's representatives.

The presidents now thought that it was time to open the Congress. The Bishop of Gurk excused the Emperor's absence, and inveighed against the Turks. Then Cardinal Cusa pointed out that the Greeks had drawn their ruin upon their own heads by their stubbornness in rejecting union with the Holy See. The Papal legate spoke a few words. Next the ambassadors of the Teutonic Knights inveighed against the King of Poland, and the session ended in a wrangle. The next session was spent in a strife about precedence between the Polish envoys and those of the Electors.

On May 9 Philip of Burgundy and Lewis of Bavaria entered Regensburg with pomp. The Imperial presidents offered to hold their sessions in Philip's house if that would suit his convenience. Philip modestly declined; and it was agreed that the Congress should sit in the Town Hall. Indeed the

Arrival of  
the Duke  
of Bur-  
gundy at  
Regens-  
burg. May  
9, 1454.

<sup>1</sup> This vow of the Pheasant is described by Olivier de la Marche, who himself personated the Church in the pageant.

proposal would hardly have suited the Duke's habits : for Æneas tells us that he rose at noon, did a little business, dined, had a nap, took some athletic exercise, supped till late at night, and finished his day with music and dancing. Such a man was not likely to sit very long over tedious deliberations. But before the business of the crusade was undertaken, the German princes declared their intentions. John of Lysura, the confidential adviser of the Archbishop of Trier, suggested that the Germans should meet separately at the house of Lewis of Bavaria. There he proposed that they should consider what strength they had to lead against the Turks. The Imperial representatives saw in this a means of exposing the poverty of the Emperor, and refused to enter upon the subject. Then Lysura spoke warmly of the distracted state of Germany, and its need of internal reform before it embarked on enterprises abroad ; he insisted that the Emperor ought to meet the Electors, and deliberate on German affairs before he put forward a scheme for a crusade. The Imperial envoys admitted the truth of Lysura's complaints, but urged the primary importance of the crusade : if it were to be deferred till Germany was reorganised, it would have long to wait.

The arrival of the Markgraf of Brandenburg increased the number of princes, but brought an ally of the Teutonic Knights against Poland, and threatened to divert the Congress from the question of the crusade. At length, however, the public proceedings were resumed. Æneas Sylvius spoke against the Turks, and urged immediate action. Silence followed his speech, which, being in Latin, was probably understood by few, and was translated into German by the Bishop of Gurk. Then Cardinal Cusa gave an account of Constantinople, and of the Turks, from his personal knowledge ; his speech was similarly translated into German by John of Lysura. The Bishop of Pavia spoke also, and the assembled princes separated to deliberate. Next day the Imperial envoys were asked to state the Emperor's proposals. This they

Proceed-  
ings of  
the Con-  
gress.

did in writing, and demanded that by April, 1455, an army sufficient to overwhelm the Turks should be in readiness to serve for three years. They suggested that throughout Germany every sixty men should furnish one horseman and two foot duly equipped for the field; in this way an army of 200,000 men would be raised. Besides this, the cities were to provide all necessary ammunition and means of transport. The Pope, Naples, Venice, and the other maritime cities of Italy should prepare a fleet, while the land army, joined by the Bohemians and Hungarians, was to cross the Danube. A peace for five years was to be proclaimed throughout Germany, beginning from next Christmas; whoever violated it should be under the ban of the Empire. To make further arrangements, another Diet was to meet on September 29 at Nürnberg, if the Emperor could come there; if he could not, at Frankfort.

It was a splendid scheme; but schemes on paper are not costly, and Frederick III. was willing to be magnificent where no expense was involved. The Germans listened, but urged their own business. John of Lysura clung to his scheme of a reformation of the Empire. Albert of Brandenburg was busy with his quarrel against Poland. The Congress might have sat long had not the Duke of Burgundy grown impatient: his health suffered at Regensburg, and he was anxious to get away. Accordingly it was agreed that an answer should be given to the Emperor's proposals. Albert of Brandenburg spoke on behalf of the Germans. He faintly praised the Emperor's zeal, but deferred all criticism of his scheme till the forthcoming Diet, when there would be a fuller assembly and fuller information. Nothing, however, could be done till Germany was at peace, and for this purpose the Emperor must meet the princes and fully discuss with them the state of affairs. After this lukewarm speech, which dealt rather with the affairs of Germany than the affairs of Christendom, the Bishop of Toul, in the name of the Duke of Burgundy, declared his master's zeal for the crusade, and his willing-

Resolutions of  
the Congress.  
May, 1454.

ness to take part in any expedition which might be agreed upon by the Emperor or any other Christian princes. Then Æneas Sylvius, and afterwards the Bishop of Pavia, thanked the Duke of Burgundy and Albert of Brandenburg for their zeal, and the Congress separated at the end of May, with every outward appearance of satisfaction and hope.

Yet this empty talk deceived no one. Æneas Sylvius wrote to a friend in Italy<sup>1</sup> on June 5 in the following strain: 'My wishes differ from my hopes: I cannot persuade myself of any good result. You ask, Why? I answer, Why should I hope? Christendom has no head whom all will obey. Neither Pope nor Emperor receives what is his due. There is no reverence, no obedience. We look on Pope and Emperor alike as names in a story or heads in a picture. Each state has its own king; there are as many princes as there are houses. How will you persuade this multitude of rulers to take up arms? Suppose they do, who is to be leader? How is discipline to be maintained? How is the army to be fed? Who can understand the different tongues? Who will reconcile the English with the French, Genoa with Naples, the Germans with the Bohemians and Hungarians? If you lead a small army against the Turks, you will be defeated; if you lead a large one there will be confusion. Thus there are difficulties on every side.'

Having such opinions, Æneas was desirous to escape further disappointment and leave the uncongenial land of Germany for his native country. He had gained all that he could from his sojourn at the Imperial court. Frederick's position had now sunk so low as to be desperate, and important affairs no longer centred round him. Frederick, however, refused to part with Æneas just then; he was determined not to go in person to the Diet, but to send again Æneas and the Bishop of Gurk. Among the princes he nominated as his represen-

Opinion  
of Æneas  
Sylvius  
about the  
Congress.

Diet of  
Frankfort.  
October,  
1454.

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Leonardus de Benevolentibus, *Epistolæ*, 127, ed. Basel.

tatives the Markgrafs of Brandenburg and Baden. The Pope contented himself with again nominating as his legate the Bishop of Pavia. The Diet of Frankfort filled the month of October, 1454, and in its outward forms resembled that of Regensburg. Æneas showed more than his wonted eloquence, and spoke for two hours; the Bishop of Toul asserted the zeal of the Duke of Burgundy, and the Bishop of Pavia, in the name of the Pope, tried to inflame the ardour of Christendom. The demand for a crusade had already become more serious, as was seen by the presence of ambassadors from Hungary, who loudly called for help, and declared that if it were not given they would be driven to make peace with the Turks to protect their own frontier. With a view to awaken more enthusiasm, Fra Capistrano came and preached at Frankfort. The people heard him gladly; but the diplomats of the Congress were unmoved. Of the German princes there were present the Markgrafs of Brandenburg and Baden, and the Archbishops of Trier and Mainz. But they were all bent on their own schemes. Albert of Brandenburg, who was regarded as friendly to the Emperor, was the most conspicuous man among the German princes, and urged the reform of the Empire as a means of obtaining a wider sphere for his energy. Against him was secretly formed a party, at the head of which was the Pfalzgraf Frederick, but its moving spirit was Jacob of Trier. This party won over Albert of Austria, the Emperor's brother, by holding out hopes of the deposition of Frederick and his own election in his stead. On the deposition of the Emperor would follow the summons of a new Council and the revival of the cry for ecclesiastical reform. Thus in Germany the princes were agreed that internal reform must precede any undertaking abroad; but they were not united in their conception of reform, and under the name of reform were pursuing private ends and separate intrigues.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Droysen, *Geschichte Preussens Politik*, ii., 116 (ed. 1868).

Coldness  
of the  
Diet to-  
wards the  
crusade.

In this state of things the Emperor's ambassadors had to listen to nothing save complaints. When the time came for a definite promise, they were told that the crusade was merely a pretext used by the Pope and the Emperor to extort money; they would find that Germany would give them neither money nor soldiers. The zeal of the Burgundians was turned into ridicule; the Hungarians were bidden to defend their own kingdom, and not try to involve Germany in their calamities. It required all the diplomacy of the Imperial and Papal party to avert an absolute refusal of supplies for a crusade.<sup>1</sup> It was only through the influence of Albert of Brandenburg that a decent semblance of zeal for the cause of Europe was expressed. It was agreed that an army of 10,000 horse and 30,000 foot be sent by Germany to the aid of the Hungarians, on condition that the Pope equip in Italy a fleet of twenty-five galleys to attack the Turks in Greece. This undertaking was made the more readily because of the belief that the conditions would never be fulfilled. 'The princes say,' writes Capistrano to the Pope, 'Why should we spend our zeal, our goods, the bread of our children, when the Pope consumes in building towers the revenues of S. Peter, which ought to be devoted to the defence of the Christian faith?'

Schemes  
of the  
German  
Electors.

The Diet might arrive at its own conclusions; but Jacob of Trier was secretly pursuing his course. As it was clear that the Emperor would not come to meet the princes, it was resolved that the princes should go to him. Another Diet was proclaimed to be held at Neustadt on February 2, 1455, ostensibly for the purpose of arranging for the levy of the German forces, really for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the Emperor so as to strengthen the power of the princes. Jacob of Trier had skilfully drafted a scheme for the reform of the Empire, which was accepted by the Archbishops of Köln and Mainz.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comm.*, p. 23.



It proposed that the Emperor should confer with the Electors about the pacification of the Empire, for which was needed a reorganisation of judicature and finance. Moreover, the Emperor should be required to urge on the Pope the summons of a new Council, in accordance with the provisions of the decrees of Constance, and the Papal undertaking at the time of the restoration of the German obedience. It was a fair-sounding scheme; but even while he penned it Jacob of Trier let it be seen that it was only meant to be a pretence. He recommended his proposal on the ground that 'when the Pope sees us anxious to have a Council, he will be more willing to please us, and will pay more heed to the requests made by us to the Curia in matters which he now refuses. Likewise the Emperor, when he sees that we wish to stir him up, will be more willing to please us, and follow our advice in all matters.'<sup>1</sup> The plan was to bring pressure to bear both on the Emperor and the Pope, so as to establish still more surely the independence of the German princes, and win from both sides all the concessions which they wished. To make their plan stronger, Albert of Austria was to be used as a rival to Frederick; and the threat of a Council was to be a means of separating the interests of the Pope from those of the Emperor.

Such were the schemes of Jacob of Trier, when, in February, 1455, he arrived at Neustadt. He was the only Elector present; but four others sent representatives, who were under Jacob's orders. Ladislas of Hungary came to Vienna; but refused to advance to Neustadt, as he had no desire to meet his former guardian. Æneas Sylvius invited Fra Capistrano to bring his eloquence to Neustadt. He promised him good sport. 'Our amphitheatre will be established, and there will be Circensian games grander than those of Julius Cæsar or Cnæus Pom-

Diet of  
Neustadt.  
February,  
1455.

<sup>1</sup> This document, entitled 'Abschiedt zwischen geistlichen Churfürsten, mit was Mittel das Röm. Reich wieder aufzubringen wäre, und wie man im künftigen Concilio reden solle,' is printed in Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, vi., 10.

peius. I do not know whether there will be foreign beasts or only those of Germany : but Germany has wild beasts of many kinds, and perhaps Bohemia will send the Beast of the Apocalypse. If our sport be only moderate, you will have a bag well filled with every kind of game, slain by the sword that proceeds from your mouth. If your valour comes victorious out of the amphitheatre, we will have an army against our foes abroad, when our enemies at home have been dispersed.'<sup>1</sup> Æneas could jest even on the most serious matters, and Fra Capistrano was not so simple a devotee that he could not understand the subtleties of the higher politics.

Albert of Brandenburg and Charles of Baden were the only other German princes who appeared. The Bishop of Toul again came from Burgundy, and the Bishop of Pavia again represented the Pope. The only foreign power who sent an envoy was the King of Naples. On February 26 the proceedings began with a wrangle about precedence of seats between Jacob of Trier and the Neapolitan ambassadors. Then Æneas and the Bishop of Pavia spoke about the crusade : but neither of them had any assurance to offer of the Pope's activity. The Bishop of Pavia had not visited Rome during the interval between the Diets, and had no fresh instructions to communicate. The Neapolitan envoys declared that their King would be ready in May to sail against the Turks, if Germany sent its army for a land expedition at the same time. The Bishop of Toul again asserted the zeal of the Duke of Burgundy. Jacob of Trier declared that the Electors were ready to do all that befitted good Christians.

After these empty words Jacob of Trier pressed upon the Emperor his scheme of reform. He spoke in the name of all the Electors ; and the representatives of the princes and Imperial cities were all on his side. Moreover, Jacob was in constant communication

Fruitless  
proceed-  
ings of  
the Diet.

Proposals  
for reform  
of the  
Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Sylv., *Epist.*, 403, ed. Basel.

with Ladislas of Bohemia and Hungary, whose presence at Vienna was a perpetual threat to the Emperor. The Hungarian envoys pleaded for help from Germany; and the luckless Emperor sat helpless to answer. It seemed almost impossible for him to extricate himself with decency from the difficulties that beset him on every side. If he gave way to the Electors, the scanty remnants of his power were gone; if he refused, the Diet would not vote troops for the crusade, and the Emperor would be rendered ludicrous in the eyes of Christendom. From this perplexity he and his counsellors were delivered by the news of the death of Nicolas V., which reached Neustadt on April 12. As this news threw into uncertainty the possibility of an expedition from Italy, it was useless to determine on a German expedition. The Pope's death also opened up other plans to Jacob of Trier and his confederates. It was agreed to put off till next spring the levy of troops for the aid of Hungary, and meanwhile to proclaim throughout the Empire peace for two years. With this lame conclusion the Diet came to an end, to the Emperor's great relief.

Nicolas V. had been greatly affected by the capture of Constantinople, and by the new responsibilities which were consequently thrown upon his shoulders. The character of a statesman and a warrior, summoning Europe to a mighty enterprise, was not within the conceptions which Nicolas V. had set before himself. He regarded it as a cruel misfortune to his future fame that he should have to undertake a position for which he had in no way fitted himself. He had not the energy to reconstruct his plans; he was half-hearted in the conduct of the crusading movement, yet he keenly felt the ignoble position in which he was actually placed. He had dreamed of leaving a great reputation as the restorer of Rome, the patron of men of letters, the inaugurator of a new era, in which the Papacy at the head of European culture quietly reasserted its old prestige over the minds of men. This was not yet to be; and Nicolas, disappointed and enfeebled by the gout, grew

Death-bed  
of Nicolas  
V. March,  
1455.

daily more infirm. When he felt that his end was approaching he wished to justify his policy, and claim due recognition of his merits before he quitted the stage of life.<sup>1</sup> He gathered the Cardinals round his bedside the day before his death, and addressed to them his last testament. First he spoke of the mercies of God as shown in the sacraments, and of his hope of a heavenly kingdom. Then he proceeded to defend himself for his expenditure of money in buildings in Rome, on which point the Cardinals listened with the most profound interest. Only the learned, he said, could understand the grounds of the Papal authority: the unlearned needed the testimony of their eyes, the sight of the magnificent memorials which embodied the history of Papal greatness. The buildings of Rome were the means of securing the devotion of Christendom, on which the Papal power rested. They were also the means of procuring for the Pope safety and peace at home. The records of the past, even the events of the pontificate of Eugenius IV., showed how needful were precautions for the personal safety of the Pope. 'Wherefore,' said the dying Pope, 'I have built fortresses at Gualdo, Fabriano, Assisi, Castellana, Narni, Orvieto, Spoleto, Viterbo, and other places: I have repaired and fortified the walls of Rome; I have restored the forty stations of the Cross, and the Basilicas founded by Gregory the Great: I have made this palace of the Vatican, and the adjacent Basilica of S. Peter, with the streets leading to it, fit for the use and dignity of the Holy See and the Curia.' He recalled the glories of his pontificate—the ending of the schism, the celebration of the Jubilee, the coronation of Frederick, his efforts for a crusade, the pacification of Italy. 'The towns in the States of the Church,' he continued, 'that were in ruins and in debt, I have restored to prosperity, and have adorned with pearls

<sup>1</sup> This is Manetti's metaphor; *Vita Nicolai*, Mur., iii., pt. 2, 945: 'Tanquam absoluta quædam totius comœdiæ perfectio reliquis prioribus tam laudabilibus et tam celebratis operationibus suis non injuria correspondisse et consonasse videatur'.

and precious stones, with buildings, books, tapestries, gold and silver vessels for the use of the churches. All this I have done, not by simony, by avarice, nor by parsimony—for I have been most liberal in gifts to learned men, in buying and transcribing manuscripts—but by God's blessing of peace and tranquillity in my days. The Roman Church, thus wealthy and thus peaceful, I leave to you, beseeching you to pray for God's grace that you may preserve and extend it.' <sup>1</sup> When he had ended his exhortation he dismissed the Cardinals with his benediction, and next day, March 24, he died.

The last words of Nicolas V. sufficiently show the character of his pontificate. Himself a scholar and a man of letters, he strove to mould the Papacy into the shape of his own individual predilections, which indeed fitted well enough with the aspirations of Italy in his day. Thoroughly Italian, he aimed at adapting the Papacy to the best ideal of Italy. He did not try to become powerful by arms or statesmanship, but rather withdrew from the current of Italian politics. In the midst of storm and strife, which raged in North and South Italy, the States of the Church were to be the abodes of peace, in which was to be realised the splendour of taste and learning which was the dream of Italian princes. Rome was to sum up all that was best in Italian life, and was to transmit it to the rest of Christendom. Revered in Italy as the capital of Italian thought, Rome was to be a missionary of culture to Europe, and so was to disarm suspicion and regain prestige. It was not exactly a Christian ideal that Nicolas V. set before himself. But the more religious aspirations of the time ran in the direction of ecclesiastical reform; and after the proceedings at Basel it was not judicious for a Pope to interfere with that matter at the present. Nicolas V. saw that reform was needed; but reform was too dangerous. If the Papacy could not venture on reform, the next best

Aims of  
the pon-  
tificate of  
Nicolas V.

<sup>1</sup> This speech is in Manetti's *Life*, p. 945.

thing was to identify itself with art and learning. To the demand of Germany for reformation Nicolas V. answered by offering culture. His policy was so far wise that it enabled the Papacy to exist for sixty years before the antagonism broke out into open rebellion.

In personal character Nicolas V. was a student, with a student's irritability and vanity as well as a student's high-mindedness. He loved magnificence and outward splendour, and demanded the utmost decorum from those around him. To his household he was a kind master, but impatient, hard to satisfy, and of a sharp tongue. He was easily angered, but soon repented. He was straightforward and outspoken, and required that every one else should be the same; he was remorseless to any one who equivocated or expressed himself clumsily. He was staunch to his friends, though they all had to bear his anger. He did not pay attention to his health, but studied at all hours of the day and night, was irregular in his meals, and was too much given to the use of wine as a stimulant to his energies. Æneas Sylvius puts down as his greatest fault, 'he trusted too much in himself, and wished to do everything by himself; he thought that nothing was done well unless he were engaged in it'.<sup>1</sup>

Character  
of Nicolas  
V.

<sup>1</sup> *Commentarii*, ed. Fea, 109.



## CHAPTER IV.

## NICOLAS V. AND THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

THE great glory of Nicolas V. was the splendour of the artistic revival, which he knew how to foster and direct. The restoration of the city of Rome had already occupied the attention of Martin V. and Eugenius IV. But Martin V. had to discharge the inglorious though useful work of arresting the decay of the buildings of Rome and making necessary repairs; Eugenius IV. had neither opportunity nor money to proceed far with architectural works. Still they did so much that Nicolas V. found the way prepared for great schemes of embellishing the city, and with unerring taste and judgment entered zealously upon the task. His successors, Julius II. and Leo X., have left their mark more decidedly in the form of great monumental works; Nicolas V. left his impress on the city as a whole. He wished not to associate his name with some particular work, but to transform the whole city according to a connected plan. He represents the simplicity, the sincerity, the freshness of the early Renaissance, when it was an impulse and not a study.

Architectural plans of Nicolas V.

So Nicolas V. was not content with one task only. His keen eye glanced over the whole field, his taste penetrated to the smallest details, and his practical sagacity kept pace with his architectural zeal. Besides building the Vatican palace and the basilica of S. Peter's, he restored the walls of Rome, and erected fortresses throughout the Papal States. Besides adapting the Borgo to be the residence of the Curia, he proposed to make

The adornment of Rome.

straight the crooked streets of Rome, to widen the entrances to the piazzas, and connect them with one another by colonnades such as made civic life more commodious in Bologna or Padua. Nor was his care confined to the adornment of Rome only; he built at Civita Castellana, at Orvieto, and other places in the Papal States palacès fit for the residence of the Pope or his vicar. Whatever he did he did thoroughly; if he built a chapel, he provided for every kind of ornament down to the illumination of the missal for the altar.

The schemes of Nicolas V. seem beyond the power of one man to achieve; but if his pontificate, instead of lasting eight years, had lasted for sixteen, his restless energy might have seen his plans far advanced towards completion. As it was, he began great works to which his successors gave a final shape. To carry out his designs he gathered round him a band of noble artists. Chief amongst his architects were the Florentines Bernardo Gamberelli, known as Rosellino,<sup>1</sup> Antonio di Francesco, and the famous Leo Battista Alberti. As painters he had Fra Angelico, whose frescoes of the lives of S. Stephen and S. Lurance still adorn the Capella di S. Lorenzo in the Vatican, Benozzo Gozzoli and Andrea Castegno, from Florence; and from Perugia, Benedetto Bonfiglio, the master of Pietro Perugino. There were decorators, jewellers, workers in painted glass, in intarsia, and in embroidery. The city swarmed with an army of artisans, employed by the magnificent Pope to convert Rome into a strong and splendid city, of which the crowning glory was to be the Papal quarter beyond the Tiber, with its mighty palace and church, which were to be the wonder of the world. Blocks of travertine were quarried at Trivoli, and brought by water down the Anio, or dragged by oxen to the city. Nor did Nicolas V. spare the antiquities of Rome to minister to his new glories. The Colosseum was

<sup>1</sup> See Vasari's life of Bernardo Rosellino, and Müntz, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i., 80.

Artists  
and archi-  
tects of  
Nicolas  
V.

used as a quarry, and some of the smaller temples disappeared. The Renaissance was to Nicolas V. a new birth, sprung from his own magnificence and identified with his glory. Rome was to be the city of the Popes, not of the Emperors.

When Nicolas V. died he had rebuilt the walls of Rome, strengthened, from Alberti's plans, the Castle of S. Angelo, fortified the chief towns in the Papal States, restored the churches of SS. Apóstoli, S. Celso, S. Stefano Rotondo, and S. Maria Maggiore, rebuilt a great part of the Capitol, reorganised the water supply of Rome, and begun the fountain of Trevi. Besides all this, he had commenced from the foundation the rebuilding of the basilica of S. Peter's, and had begun the choir. In the Vatican palace he had finished the chapel of S. Lorenzo and had built and splendidly decorated many chambers round the Cortile del Belvedere, where he began the library. He might sigh that he could not finish all that he had undertaken; but he succeeded in marking out a plan which his successors carried out, the plan of erecting a mighty symbol of the Papal power, which should to all time appeal to the imagination, and kindle the enthusiastic admiration of Christendom.

This architectural revival of Nicolas V. rested upon a new conception which had gradually been changing the thought of Europe. Literature can only be concerned with expressing and arranging the ideas which are actually moving the minds of men. At the downfall of the Roman Empire the old classical culture had to give way before the necessities of the struggle against the barbarians, and Christianity formed the common ground on which Roman and barbarian ideas could be assimilated in a new form. Christian literature was first engaged with the expression of Christian truth and the task of ecclesiastical organisation. The work that occupied thinking men in the early Middle Ages was the reconstruction of society on a Christian basis. Their labour

Buildings  
of Nicolas  
V.

Decay of  
literature  
in the  
Middle  
Ages.

found its expression in the conception of the Empire and the Papacy, a conception which the genius of Gregory VII. impressed upon the imagination of Europe, and the Crusades gave a practical exhibition of its force. It was natural that during a period of reconstruction there was little thought of style; the builder, not the artist, was needed for an edifice in which strength, not ornament, was required. To this the literature of classical antiquity could contribute nothing; it was known by some, perhaps by many, but there was no place for it in the world's work.

As soon, however, as Christendom was organised there was a possibility for the individual to find his own place in the new structure; there was room for the organisation of individual thought, for expression of individual feeling. While society was struggling to assert itself against anarchy, the individual had no place. When the lines of social organisation had once been traced the individual, having gained a foothold, could survey his lodging. Classical literature, which had been hitherto of little value, became precious as a model, both of individual feeling and of the means of giving it expression. Italy was naturally the first country to lead the way to this new literature. She was conscious of her antiquity while other European nations were only awakening to the consciousness of their youth. While the Teutons turned for literary inspiration to nature and to the legendary heroes of their early days, Italy turned to classical antiquity, to the memorials that surrounded her on every side. Her early literature was reflective, and displayed the workings of the individual soul. Teutonic literature was national, and aimed at expressing the rude aspirations of the present in the forms of a legendary past.

So it was that Dante summed up the first period of Italian literature, and gave an artistic form to the aspirations of Christian culture. To him classical antiquity and Christianity went hand in hand. Virgil led him in his soul's pilgrimage to a spiritual emancipation

Revival  
of the  
classical  
spirit in  
Italy.

Dante.

which was the combined result of philosophic thought, the experience of life, and the guidance of heavenly illumination. To the large spirit of Christian culture, in which faith and reason were combined, and to which the mediæval ideal of a cosmopolitan Christendom was still a reality, Dante gave an ultimate expression. It was the ideal of Gregory VII. transformed by all the knowledge, all the sentiment, and all the reflection which the individual could acquire for himself.

But this ideal of Christendom was not to be realised. Dante, though he knew it not, lived through the period of the fall of Empire and Papacy alike. <sup>Revival of learning.</sup> With the Pope at Avignon and the Empire in anarchy, it was no longer possible for the individual life to attach its aspirations to what was manifestly powerless. The individual was more and more driven to consider himself and the workings of his own mind. Dante had used his own personality as a symbol of universal man. Petrarch did not advance beyond the expression of phases of feeling. But the study of phases of feeling led to a larger conception of the variety of individual life, a conception which animates with reality the pages of Boccaccio. This distinctly human and individual literature brought with it a quickened sense of beauty, an appreciation of form, a desire for a more perfect style. When once this feeling was awakened the study of classical antiquity assumed a new importance: only through it could men attain to clear ideas, accurate expressions, beautiful forms. To discover these the Italian mind devoted itself with passionate enthusiasm to the revival of classical antiquity, the study of its records, the imitation of its modes of thought. Instead of striving to reconstruct the decaying ideal of a united Christendom, Italy devoted itself to the development of the individual life; instead of labouring for the reform of the Church, Italy was busy with the acquisition of literary and artistic style.

Hence it was that Italy played so small a part in the great movement of the fifteenth century for the reformation

of the Church. France and Germany laboured at Constance and Basel for the ending of the schism and the reorganisation of Christendom in accordance with the consciences of men. Italy had passed beyond the sphere of the scholastic formulæ which were in the mouths of conciliar theologians. She was inventing a new method, and had little interest in questions which concerned merely external organisation. While the Fathers of Constance looked upon Hus as a rebel who would rend asunder the unity of Christendom, the cultivated Italian, Poggio, admired his originality and compared him with the great men of old time. While theologians were engaged in determining by appeals to Christian antiquity the authority of General Councils, Poggio was ransacking the adjacent monasteries in search of manuscripts of classical authors. The breach had begun between the Italian and the Teutonic spirit. The Italians were bent upon securing for the individual emancipation from outward systems by means of culture; the Teutons wished to adapt the system of Christendom to the requirements of the awakening individual. The Renaissance and the Reformation began to pursue different courses.

The Papacy, as having its seat in Italy, could not remain unaffected by the national impulse. Though Florence was the centre of the early Renaissance, its influence quickly spread, and students of classical antiquity were rapidly attached to every Italian court. Manuscripts were collected, academies were formed, and public business was transacted with strict attention to the best models. The Papacy could not lag behind the prevailing fashion. Already, under Innocent VII., Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini were attached to the Papal Curia as secretaries. The Greek scholar, Emmanuel Chrysoloras, was employed by John XXIII., and followed him to Constance, where he died. Martin V. was too busy with other matters to pay much heed to literature; but under Eugenius IV. the Italian humanists found that their



own interests were closely bound up with the Papacy. The struggle between the Pope and the Council of Basel brought into prominence the growing antagonism between the Italian and the Teutonic spirit, between the Renaissance and the Reformation. The opposition of the Council to the Pope was resented as an attempt to rob Italy of part of its old prestige. The new learning was animated on its side by a missionary spirit; its mission was to carry throughout Europe a new culture, and the Papacy was one of its means. Though Eugenius IV. was in no way associated in character with the Italian spirit of culture, yet the humanists gathered round him, and Poggio, Aurispa, Vegio, Biondo, and Perotti were numbered amongst his secretaries.

Nicolas V. was genuinely Italian, and was himself thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of the new learning. Before he became Pope he had been a great collector of manuscripts, which he delighted to transcribe with his own hand. He had arranged the library of S. Marco for Cosimo de' Medici, and was eager to eclipse it at Rome. If the Papacy by its magnificence were to assert its power over Christendom, it must stand at the head of the mission of Italian culture. So Nicolas V. declared himself the patron of all men of learning, and they were not slow in gathering round him. Rome had produced few scholars of its own; but Nicolas V. was bent on making it a home of learning. He eagerly gathered manuscripts from every side, and employed a whole host of transcribers and translators within the Vatican, while his agents traversed Greece, Germany, and even Britain in search of hidden treasures. Even the fall of Constantinople could not be regarded as entirely a misfortune, for it brought to Italy the literary wealth of Greece. 'Greece has not fallen,' said Filelfo, 'but seems to have migrated to Italy, which in old days bore the name of Magna Græcia.'<sup>1</sup> When Nicolas V. died he left behind him a library of five

Literature  
under  
Nicolas  
V.

<sup>1</sup> Philelphi, *Epistolæ*, xiii., 1.

thousand volumes, an enormous collection for the days before printing.<sup>1</sup> When in 1450 the Jubilee brought with it a pestilence, occasioned by the crowded state of the city, and Nicolas fled before the plague to Fabriano, he took with him his host of transcribers, of whom he demanded as much zeal as he himself displayed. 'You were the slave of Nicolas,' says Æneas Sylvius to his friend Piero da Noceto, 'and had no fixed time for eating or sleeping; you could not converse with your friends or go into the light of day, but were hidden in murky air, in dust, in heat, and in unpleasant smells.'<sup>2</sup> The Pope's passion was well known, and the world's tribute flowed to Rome in the shape of manuscripts. For these literary treasures Nicolas V. rebuilt the Vatican library, and appointed as its librarian Giovanni Tortelli, of Arezzo, the author of a grammatical work, '*De Orthographia Dictionum a Græcis tractarum*'.

Chief among the Pope's assistants in his formation of a library was the good Florentine bookseller, Vespasiano da Bisticci, whose love and respect for his patron may be read in his own simple language.<sup>3</sup> From Florence also Nicolas V. invited his more famous biographer, Gianozzo Manetti, whom he made a Papal secretary, and also conferred on him a pension of six hundred ducats. Manetti, a small man with a large head, who enjoyed robust health, was a rigorous student, and had generally spent five hours in reading before the greater part of his fellow-men had risen from bed. He was of great repute in his native city of Florence, and was a leading statesman, employed in many important embassies, where his eloquence always gained him a ready hearing. He obtained leave from the Florentines to transfer himself to the Pope's service, and was engaged by Nicolas V., with

<sup>1</sup> Manetti, in Muratori, iii., part 2, 926.

<sup>2</sup> Æn. Syl., *Epistolæ*, 188.

<sup>3</sup> There is no more interesting work, nor one which throws a more intimate light on the history of Italy in the fifteenth century, than Vespasiano's *Vite di Uomini Illustri*, originally published by Mai in *Spicilegium Romanum*, vol. i., afterwards by Bartoli (Florence, 1859).

characteristic impetuosity, on the two mighty works of writing an Apology for Christianity against Jews and Heathens, and translating into Latin the Old and New Testaments. Manetti had so far advanced in his task at the death of Nicolas V. that he had written ten books against the Jews, and had translated the Psalms, the four Gospels, the Epistles, and the Revelation.<sup>1</sup> Manetti's life of his patron is the chief record of the greatness of the schemes of Nicolas V., which Manetti chronicled with enthusiasm, though his style is pompous and his panegyric laboured.

Nicolas V. found in the Curia an old acquaintance, the literary veteran Poggio Bracciolini, who in the days of Boniface IX. took service in the Papal Chancery, and soon associated with himself his friend Leonardo Bruni. He went to Constance with John XXIII., and on his fall betook himself to the occupation of searching for manuscripts in the neighbouring monasteries, while he surveyed the proceedings of the Council with quiet contempt. Poggio was a true explorer and warmed with his task; he rescued from the dust and dirt of oblivion Quintilian, several orations of Cicero, Ammianus Marcellinus, Lucretius, and many other works. His zeal carried him to Langres, Köln, and ultimately to England, where, however, he found scanty patronage in the turbulent times of Henry VI. Many were his endeavours to send explorers to Sweden in search of the lost books of Livy. Long were his negotiations to obtain from the Monastery of Fulda the complete manuscript of the 'Annals' of Tacitus, which he edited in 1429. Under Eugenius IV. he did not find himself amid congenial surroundings; and he hailed with delight the accession to the Papacy of his friend Tommaso of Sarzana, to whom he had dedicated in 1449 a Dialogue on the 'Unhappiness of Princes'. It was a species of composition then much in vogue, consisting of moral reflections illustrated by historical examples, founded on the model of Cicero's 'Dialogues'.

<sup>1</sup> See Naldus, *Vita Manetti*, Muratori, xx., 529. There is at the end a list of all Manetti's writings.

Following upon the same lines, Poggio went on to write and dedicate 'to the same man, though not under the same name,' his most interesting work, a Dialogue on the 'Vicissitudes of Fortune'. Poggio represents himself as reposing with a friend on the Capitol after an inspection of the ruins of Rome. He moralises on the scanty remnants of her ancient grandeur, and in so doing gives the completest description we possess of the appearance of the city at that time. From this he goes on to quote great instances of the instability of fortune, which leads him to survey the changes of Europe from 1377 to the end of Martin V. The Pontificate of Eugenius IV. illustrates his theme so pointedly, that a whole book is devoted to it. Then the writer takes a sudden leap, and tells us the travels of a Venetian, Niccolo Conti, who had told him the story of his adventures during a residence of twenty-five years in Persia and India. The whole work is a store of curious and interesting information, given with much sprightliness of style and keenness of observation.<sup>1</sup> Poggio hailed Nicolas V. as a second Mæcenas, and expressed his joy at the downfall of the monkish favourites of Eugenius IV. by a stinging 'Dialogue against Hypocrisy,' in which he held up to ridicule the affected piety of self-seeking monks, and gathered a number of scandalous stories of their frauds and tricks practised in the name of religion.<sup>2</sup> Poggio himself made no pretence at the concealment of his own life and character, but published soon after his 'Facetiæ,' or jest-book, a collection of good stories which he and his friends in the Papal Chancery used to tell for one another's amusement in their leisure moments. We are not surprised that men who indulged in such frankness as these stories betoken, found even the restraint of the neighbourhood of a monk's frock burdensome to their overflowing and unseemly wit. Poggio's pen, like that of many of his contemporaries,

<sup>1</sup> Poggio, *De Varietate Fortunæ*, was not published in its completeness till 1723, by the Abate Oliva, at Paris.

<sup>2</sup> *Dialogus contra Hypocrisim* is published in the Appendix to *Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum*, 570, etc.

was ready not only to copy the finer forms of classical expression, but also the licentiousness of paganism and the fertility of vituperation which marked the decadence of classical literature. To please Nicolas V., Poggio composed a philippic against Amadeus of Savoy, and called to his aid all the wealth of Ciceronian invective to overwhelm the anti-Pope and the Council of Basel. He was, however, employed on more serious works of scholarship, and translated Xenophon's 'Cyropedia,' and at the request of Nicolas V., the 'History of Diodorus Siculus'.<sup>1</sup>

These scholars of the Papal Court were by no means free from literary jealousies and rivalries. Factions and disputes were rife amongst them, as was natural when each had to preserve a reputation for pre-eminence in his own subject. Chief amongst the Greek scholars whom Nicolas V. welcomed in Rome was George of Trapezus, who translated for him many of the works of the Greek fathers, Eusebius of Cæsarea, Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzum, and Basil. But the revival of Greek literature led to a deep interest in Greek philosophy, and Gemistos Plethon established at Florence a school of devoted students of Plato, who was almost a new discovery to the thought of the time. The doctrines of Aristotle and Plato were eagerly discussed; and Cardinal Bessarion, at the request of Nicolas V., translated Aristotle's 'Metaphysics,' while Theodore Gaza translated the 'History of Animals,' and Theophrastus's 'History of Plants'. George of Trapezus thought it due to his own importance to attack a work of Bessarion, which maintained the Platonic view that nature acts with design, which is the stamp of the Divine Intelligence. Bessarion answered him, and the controversy created great interest. George of Trapezus, in an evil moment, undertook to translate Plato's 'Laws,' which he did with great rapidity. Bessarion criticised his translation, a task of some moment, as George professed to give a specimen of Plato's

George of  
Trapezus  
and Bessarion.

<sup>1</sup> Printed Bononiæ, 1472.

teaching; he convicted him of 259 errors, and concluded that his translation had almost as many mistakes as it had words.<sup>1</sup> George certainly cannot have been an accurate translator, as Æneas Sylvius says, that in one of his translations from Aristotle he found Cicero mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Nicolas V. felt his belief shattered; he withdrew his patronage from George, who in 1453 retired to Naples, where he was received by King Alfonso. He was an irritable man and took his revenge by general railing. Amongst other things he asserted that Poggio's translations had been made by his assistance; that the merits were his, and the mistakes were Poggio's.<sup>3</sup>

No doubt Poggio would have answered this aspersion on his scholarship; but probably it never came to his ears, as in 1453 he was appointed to the honourable office of Chancellor of his native city of Florence, where he took up his abode after spending fifty years in the Papal service. Moreover, he was engaged in a literary controversy with an opponent more formidable than George of Trapezus—the learned Lorenzo Valla. If Poggio is the most celebrated literary man of the Early Renaissance, Valla is undoubtedly the man of the keenest mind. Poggio might boast of a more limpid style, but Valla was the sounder scholar. Poggio founded himself on Cicero, Valla preferred Quintilian. Valla's 'Elegantiae' is a comprehensive attempt to deal with Latin grammar in a scientific spirit, and it was this that gave him a pre-eminence over men like Poggio, who were merely literary Latinists. Valla was born in Piacenza, but was educated in Rome under the care of Leonardo Bruni till he reached the age of twenty-four. Then he taught at Piacenza and Pavia, till he betook himself to Alfonso of Naples, at the time when he was bitterly opposed to

<sup>1</sup> This controversy is to be found in Bessarion's treatises, *De Natura et Arte*, and *In Calumniatorem Platonis*.

<sup>2</sup> *Epistolæ*, 95.

<sup>3</sup> 'Quotidianis laboribus meis . . . vel vertisse illum vel pervertisse,' in a letter of George, quoted by Georgius, *Vita Nicolai V.*, 177.



Eugenius IV. The hate of a Roman against priestly domination joined with a desire to strike a blow in his patron's behalf. Valla turned his keen critical spirit, which had been trained in the methods of scientific inquiry, to an examination of the grounds on which rested the story of the donation of Constantine of the patrimony of S. Peter to Pope Sylvester. In his work, 'On the Donation of Constantine,'<sup>1</sup> he set forth vividly the historical aspect of such an event; he imagined Constantine wishing to make such an alienation of the territory of the Empire; he pictured the remonstrance of the Senate, the humble deprecation of the Pope. He examined the nature of the evidence for this donation, and mocked at the claims of tradition to be credited when contemporary records were silent. 'If any one among the Greeks, the Hebrews, or the Barbarians were to say that such a thing were handed down by tradition, would you not ask for the author's name or the production of a record?' He criticised the wording of the forged decree (no difficult task), and showed its gross inconsistency with the facts and forms of the time at which it professed to be framed. He ended with a savage attack on the iniquities of the Papal Government, and exhorted all Christian princes to deprive the Pope of his usurped power, and so take away his means of disturbing the peace of Europe by interference in temporal affairs.

Nor was this Valla's only onslaught upon orthodox belief; he ventured to call in question the tradition that the Apostles' Creed was the joint composition of the Twelve, who met in solemn conference and each contributed a clause. This brought him into collision with the friars, and he was threatened with the Inquisition; but Alfonso interposed on his behalf, and Alfonso's reconciliation with Eugenius IV. carried Valla's reconciliation with it. Valla had no fanatical hatred to the Papacy, and was willing to own that his attack had been of the nature of a literary exercise. He wrote an

<sup>1</sup> It is printed in Valla's works, and in *Fasciculus Rerum*, i., 132.

apology to Eugenius IV., who did not, however, admit him to his favour; but Nicolas V. cared little for monastic orthodoxy, and was not prevented by Valla's free thinking from summoning to his court so eminent a scholar. For him Valla translated Thucydides; and so pleased was the Pope with his translation that he presented him with five hundred ducats, and begged him to translate Herodotus also, a task which Valla began but did not finish.

The keen critical spirit of Valla made him haughty and supercilious to his literary compeers; and meekness was in no sense their crowning virtue. As ill-luck would have it, one of Valla's pupils at Rome had a copy of Poggio's 'Letters,' in the margin of which he had written criticisms on the style, pointing out and amending what he conceived to be barbarisms. The book fell into the hands of Poggio, who was filled with wrath at this attempt to improve perfection. He at once concluded that the criticisms proceeded from Valla, and adopted his usual mode of chastising the offender. He wrote, in the most approved Ciceronian style, a violent invective against Valla, in which he defended himself against Valla's supposed criticism, scourged his arrogance and vanity, and impeached his orthodoxy. Valla replied by an 'Antidote to Poggio,' which he addressed to Nicolas V. Not content with repelling Poggio's attacks or discussing his literary character, he cast aspersions upon his private life. Poggio retorted by opening the flood-gates of abuse on Valla. Every scandalous story was raked up, every possible villainy was laid to his charge; nay, even a picture was drawn of the final judgment of the Great Day, and Valla was remorselessly condemned to perdition. Replies and counter-replies followed, and the contest between these two eminent scholars was carried on by clothing the lowest scurrility with classical language. The actual question in dispute disappeared: the wrath alone remained. Rhetorical exercises in declamatory abuse were poured forth in rapid succession. What fills us with surprise is the fact that Nicolas V. did not use

Quarrel of  
Poggio  
and Valla.

his influence to stop this unseemly exhibition. He received the dedication of Valla's 'Antidote'; and though other men of letters, who were by no means squeamish, remonstrated with the angry combatants, Nicolas V. did not interfere. It would seem that an interest in style had already overpowered, even in the head of Christendom, any feeling of decorum, not to say morality, as regarded the subject-matter. Love for the forms of classical antiquity was already strong enough to override the spirit of Christianity. The criticisms of Valla on popular religion awakened no anxiety in the heart of Nicolas V. for the stability of ecclesiastical tradition; the low scurrility of Poggio excited no care for Christian morality. An antagonism had begun which was to widen hereafter and produce disastrous results on the future of the Papacy.

The man who interposed his good offices to stop this fray between Poggio and Valla was Francesco Filelfo, Francesco Filelfo. the most adventurous and most reprobate of the literary men of the time. A native of Tolentino in the March of Ancona, Filelfo sought his fortune on every side. First he taught in Venice; then in 1420 went as secretary to an embassy to Constantinople. There he studied Greek under John Chrysolaras, whose daughter he married. He won the favour of the Greek Emperor, went as envoy to Murad II., and afterwards to Hungary, and returned to Venice in 1427 with a treasure of Greek manuscripts. As Venice would not pay him enough, he went to Bologna, and thence to Florence. He was a savage literary gladiator, openly seeking his fortune and restrained by no moral principles. His overweening vanity offended his literary contemporaries, whom he attacked in shameless satires. He and Poggio had a fierce war of words, and he raised up enemies on every side. At last he attacked even Cosimo de' Medici, and found it necessary to flee to Siena, thence to Bologna, and afterwards to Milan. In 1453 he passed through Rome on his way to Naples; Nicolas V. summoned him to his presence, presented him with five hundred ducats,

and made him one of his secretaries. He read with pleasure Filelfo's satires, and urged him to undertake a translation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; for this task he offered to give him a house in Rome, an estate in the country, and to pay him ten thousand golden ducats. The death of Nicolas V. prevented the bargain from being completed.

Many other scholars of less fame worked for Nicolas V. Niccolo Perotti translated Polybius; Guarino of Verona the geography of Strabo; Piero Candido Decembrio, who had been the chief scholar in the service of Giovanni Maria Visconti, took refuge in Rome from the disturbances that followed his patron's death, and translated Appian for the Pope. Nor was it only in the sphere of Latin and Greek scholarship that Rome became the capital of literature. The sight of the monuments of Rome aroused an interest in an exact study of its past topography. Poggio looked on the ruins of Rome with the eye of a literary man who found in them food for his imagination. His contemporary, Flavio Biondo, a native of Forlì, who was made a Papal secretary by Eugenius IV., may be regarded as the founder of serious archæology. His work, '*Roma Instaurata*,' which was finished just before the death of Eugenius IV., is a careful topographical description of the city of Rome and an attempt to restore its ancient monuments. When we consider the materials which Biondo had at his command, we are struck with the sense of order and accuracy which was growing up among the Italian scholars. The work of Biondo may be formless—it cannot be said that archæology has yet advanced very far in style—but it is a careful and scholarly piece of work, such as had never been attempted before. His concluding words are an expression of the ideal of Nicolas V. After surveying the classical monuments of Rome he pauses. 'Not,' he says, 'that we despise the Rome of our own day, or think that its glories came to an end with its legions, consuls, and senate. Rome still exercises her sway over the world, not by arms and bloodshed, but by the power of religion. The

Pope is still a perpetual dictator, the Cardinals a senate; the world still brings its tribute to Rome, still flocks to see its holy relics and its sacred places.' Though Biondo himself did not proceed to describe the Christian antiquities of Rome, he warmly appreciated them; and his contemporary, Maffeo Vegio of Lodi, also a Papal secretary, wrote a careful account of the antiquities of the basilica of S. Peter's.

Such were a few of the scholars whom Nicolas V. gathered round him. Their names are now almost forgotten, though in their own day they received a respect which has rarely fallen to the lot of literary men. Their works repose undisturbed in libraries; their fame, of which they were so careful, has vanished; they are remembered merely as literary curiosities. Yet we owe some debt of gratitude to those who cleared the way for European culture. They were not men of creative genius; their merits are scientific rather than literary. They rescued from destruction the treasures of antiquity, and prepared a way for a proper understanding of them. Their method was crude; their knowledge was imperfect; their attention to rhetorical forms ludicrously exaggerated. Yet they laid the foundation of classical philology, of the science of grammar, of intelligent criticism, of clear expression. They stood at the opening of a new era, and their labours only furnished the foundation for the labours of others. One generation of scholars succeeds another, and the past are soon forgotten, however great may have been their services to a better understanding of the classical spirit, however great may have been the impulse which that heightened knowledge gave to the thought of Europe.

Value of  
the hu-  
manists.

We have spoken only of a few of the most famous scholars who gathered round Nicolas V. They are but samples of their kind, as the court of Nicolas V. was but a brilliant sample of the literary and artistic movement that was pervading the whole of Italy. Of this movement Florence was its home; and Cosimo de' Medici had seen the wisdom of



identifying his power with all that was most eminently Florentine in the aspirations of his native city. He set the example of a literary patronage, which was splendidly followed by Nicolas V., and scarcely less so by Alfonso of Naples, who made himself more Italian than the Italians, and became the ideal of a cultivated prince. He was never tired of reading classical authors, and had them read to him even at his meals. He was cured of an illness by hearing Quintus Curtius' 'Life of Alexander the Great,' and received from the Venetians a bone of Livy with all the reverence due to the relic of a saint. He and Nicolas V. carried on an honourable rivalry, which should do most for learning; and their example spread rapidly throughout the congenial soil of Italy. Almost every court had its literary circle, and literary interests held a prominent place in Italian politics of the ensuing time.

Amid these now forgotten scholars stood Nicolas V. Though not himself a man of letters, he was for that very reason better fitted to play the part of patron. He was not merely a collector of books, but was also an intelligent director of the studies of others. When we consider all that he did, we may well be amazed at the greatness of his plans and the energy with which he prosecuted them. The transformation of Rome into the undisputed capital of Europe, the attainment for the Papacy of an overpowering prestige which was to enthral men's minds—these apparently chimerical objects were pursued with unerring precision and untiring labour. Nothing was overlooked in the great plan of Nicolas V.: every part of the work was pressed on at the same time, and every part of the work was regulated by the personal judgment of the Pope. Fortresses and libraries, churches and palaces, were alike rising under the Pope's supervision; the fine arts, the literature and science of the time, all were welcomed to Rome, and found by the Pope's care a congenial sphere. We cannot render too much praise to the thoroughness with which Nicolas V. conceived and executed the plan which he had formed. But the plan was



in itself a dream of almost superhuman magnificence, and Nicolas V. expected too much when he hoped that the world's commotions would stand still and respect the charming leisure of the Papacy. The fall of Constantinople dispelled the pacific vision of the Renaissance, and brought back the mediæval dream of a crusade. Before Christendom could be rearranged under the peaceful sway of literature and theology going hand in hand, the enemies of her faith and of her civilisation had stormed the bulwark that had stood for twelve centuries, and were threatening her with a new invasion.

## CHAPTER V.

CALIXTUS III.

1455—1458.

Election  
of Alfonso  
Borgia,  
Calixtus  
III. April  
8, 1455.
 
 AFTER the funeral of Nicolas V. fifteen of the twenty Cardinals entered the Conclave. They were greatly divided in opinion, and, in fact, had no clear policy to which they were desirous to commit themselves. The first scrutinies led to no result, and the Cardinals conferred privately with one another. At first Capranica seemed to be the favourite, being commended by his learning, his high character, and his political ability. But Capranica was a Roman and a friend of the Colonna; as such he was opposed by the party of the Orsini. He was therefore passed by in favour of Bessarion, who had no enemies and enjoyed a high reputation for learning. His election would have given a worthy successor to the policy of Nicolas V., and would also have shown the zeal of the Cardinals for the crusade. In Bessarion they would have chosen a Pope sprung from the Greek nation and keenly sympathising with his conquered countrymen. For a night it seemed that Bessarion would be elected; but the morning brought reflection. He was an alien and a neophyte, a stranger to Italy and to the traditions of the Papacy. 'Shall we go to Greece,' said Alain of Avignon, 'for a head of the Latin Church? Bessarion has not yet shaved his beard, and shall we set him over us?' There was a sudden revulsion of feeling. The Cardinals, weary with the debate, suddenly made a compromise, and an old

Spanish Cardinal, Alfonso Borgia, was elected by accession on April 8. Borgia was seventy-seven years old, and owed his election to his age. As the Cardinals could not agree, they made a colourless election of one who by his speedy death would soon create another vacancy.

Alfonso Borgia was a native of Xativa in Valencia, who had distinguished himself in his youth at the University of Lerida. There he attracted the attention of his countryman, Benedict XIII., who conferred on him a canonry, and Alfonso of Aragon took him as his secretary. He did good service to the Papacy in winning for Martin V. the allegiance of Spain, and in negotiating the renunciation of the Spanish anti-Pope, Clement VIII. In recognition of these services Martin V. conferred on him the bishopric of Valentia. When the Council of Basel began its sessions Alfonso chose Borgia as his representative. Borgia refused the office, but visited Eugenius IV. at Florence, and showed great skill in negotiating peace between Alfonso and the Pope. In return Eugenius IV. in 1444 raised him to the Cardinalate, and by his wisdom and moderation Cardinal Borgia deservedly held a high place in the Curia. When the Conclave could not agree on a successor to Nicolas V., Borgia was an excellent person for the purposes of a compromise. His learning was profound, his character blameless, his political capacity stood high. His election was gratifying to Alfonso of Naples. As a Spaniard, he bore an hereditary hatred to the Turks, which would make him a fitting representative of the crusading movement.<sup>1</sup>

On April 20 Alfonso Borgia was crowned Pope, and took the title of Calixtus III. The solemnity was disturbed by a riot arising from a quarrel between one of the followers of Count Averso of Anguillara and one of the Orsini. Napoleone Orsini raised his war-cry; 3000 men-at-arms gathered round him, prepared to storm

Early life  
of Car-  
dinal  
Borgia.

Riot at his  
corona-  
tion.

<sup>1</sup> See Platina, *Vita Calixti III.*

the Lateran and drag the Count of Anguillara from the Pope's presence. Only the intervention of Cardinal Latino Orsini could appease his brother's wrath and persuade him not to mar the festivities with bloodshed. The turbulent Roman barons began at once to reckon on the feebleness of the aged Pope.

In spite of his years Calixtus soon showed that he was filled with a devouring zeal for prosecuting the war against the Turks. He solemnly committed to writing his inflexible determination.<sup>1</sup> 'I, Pope Calixtus, vow to Almighty God and the Holy Trinity that by war, maledictions, interdicts, excommunications, and all other means in my power, I will pursue the Turks, the most cruel foes of the Christian name.' With this object in view Calixtus III. sent legates to every country to quicken the zeal of Christendom. The buildings which Nicolas V. had begun were neglected; his swarms of workmen were dismissed; men of letters found themselves little regarded in the new court where severe simplicity reigned, and the old Pope rarely left his chamber. The revenues of the Papacy were no longer devoted to the erection of splendid buildings and the encouragement of letters; they were used for the equipment of the Papal fleet, and the peaceful city was full of warlike preparation.

The hopes of a European crusade were fixed on Germany; but the proceedings of the Diet of Neustadt were scarcely such as to inspire much confidence. The death of Nicolas V. and the election of a new Pope gave an opportunity to the Electors to urge upon the Emperor their grievances against the Papacy. Jacob of Trier exclaimed that now was the time to vindicate the liberty of the German Church, which was treated as the Pope's handmaid; before Calixtus III. was recognised the observance of the Concordat made by Eugenius IV. should be rigorously exacted, and the grievances of the German

Crusading  
zeal of  
Calixtus  
III.  
  
Recogni-  
tion of  
Calixtus  
III. by  
Frederick  
III.

<sup>1</sup> See *Infessura*, Muratori, iii., pt. 2, 1136.

Church should be reformed. Æneas Sylvius confirmed the troubled Emperor, who had his own grievances, because the private agreement made by Eugenius IV. had not been more strictly observed than the published Concordat. It was vain, said Æneas, for a prince to please the people, seeing that the multitude was always inconstant, and it was dangerous to give it the rein. On the other hand, the interests of the Pope and Emperor were identical, and a new Pope only gave a new opportunity for receiving favours. After a little hesitation Æneas prevailed, and he, with the jurist John Hagenbach, was sent to Rome to offer to Calixtus III. the obedience of Germany, and to lay before him the Emperor's demands.<sup>1</sup>

Æneas and his colleague did not reach Rome till August 10, when they asked for a private audience to lay Frederick's requests before the Pope. Calixtus III. stood in a more independent position towards the Emperor than his two predecessors. Eugenius IV.

German  
embassy  
at Rome.  
August,  
1455.

had bought back the obedience of Germany by secret concessions and a promise of money. Nicolas V. had been privy to this transaction, and felt himself bound by it; he had paid his share of the money promised to Frederick, but 25,000 ducats were still due.<sup>2</sup> Calixtus had had no part in the negotiations with Frederick, and knew how hopeless it was to satisfy the feeble and needy Emperor. He refused to consider his requests until he had received the obedience of Germany. Æneas Sylvius, who was anxious to reach the Cardinalate, had no objection to use his position of Imperial envoy as a means of showing his readiness to please the Pope. He professed to be confounded at this demand of the Pope; but to avoid scandal he gave way to it. He proffered the obedience of Germany in a public consistory, and made a speech, in which was no mention of the Emperor's demands, or of the stricter observance of

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Commentarii*, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Gregory Heimburg, dated 1466, in Dux, *Nicolaus von Cusa*, i., Beilage iv.

the Concordat. This speech was merely a string of compliments to the Pope and the Emperor and declamation about war against the Turk.<sup>1</sup> When, after this, the ambassadors returned, in several private audiences, to the matters entrusted to them by the Emperor, they could only appear as petitioners, not as negotiators. Calixtus roundly declared that he had no money to pay the 25,000 ducats which Frederick claimed; his other requests for a share in the tenths to be raised for the crusade, and for the right of nomination to vacant bishoprics, were deferred for further consideration. Cardinal Carvajal should be sent to satisfy the Emperor so far as was consistent with the rights of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Frederick III. was no longer the necessary ally of the Pope: his cause was now so far identified with that of the Pope that he could not desert the Papacy, and he was too unimportant in Germany to be of much service. Æneas Sylvius felt that he had now done all he could for the Papacy in Germany; his connexion with the Emperor could be of no further profit to him. He had brought to Rome letters from Frederick III., and also from Ladislas of Hungary, recommending him for the Cardinalate. This honour had been long in coming. Nicolas V. had almost promised it; but the outspoken and fiery Nicolas had never liked the subtle, shifty Sienese, and Æneas had been passed over. He now stayed in Rome in the hopes that Calixtus, as every one expected, would create him Cardinal in the coming Advent.

But the expectations of Æneas were for a time doomed to disappointment. A consistory was held for the creation of Cardinals, and congratulations were brought to Æneas, who lay bedridden with the gout. The congratulations, however, were premature. The sitting of the consistory was long and stormy; when it broke up the Cardinals were pledged to secrecy. Calixtus III. went back to the policy of Martin V., and wished to

Nepotism  
of Calix-  
tus III.

<sup>1</sup> In Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, i., 336.

<sup>2</sup> These details are given in Voigt, *Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini*, ii., 160, from MS. letter of Æneas at Vienna.



elevate his family at the expense of the Church. He proposed as the new Cardinals two of his nephews, Rodrigo Lançol y Borgia and Luis Juan de Mila, both young men little over twenty years of age, remarkable for nothing except their personal strength and vigour. Together with them he nominated a third youth, Don Jayme, son of the Infante Pedro of Portugal. The Cardinals protested loudly against this creation of two nephews ; they pointed out the scandal that was likely to arise. For a time the Pope paused ; he did not venture to publish the creation till September, when most of the Cardinals had left Rome to avoid the heat. The Cardinals murmured, but were helpless against the stubborn old man.

The desire to aggrandise his nephews was the only object which shared with the war against the Turks the interest of Calixtus III. Legates and preaching friars swarmed throughout Europe. Calixtus had no belief in Congresses ; he issued himself a proclamation of war, imposed a tax on all the clergy throughout Christendom, and fixed March 1, 1456, as the day on which a combined fleet and army was to set forth against the Turks. He appointed special priests to say mass daily in behalf of the holy war ; he ordered processions to be made for its success ; at midday each church bell was to be rung to summon the faithful to prayer, and they who said three Aves and Paternosters for victory against the Turk earned an indulgence for three years. All that was possible was done to kindle the zeal and gather the contributions of Christendom.

Calixtus  
III. pro-  
claims  
war  
against  
the Turks.

The princes, however, did not show the same zeal as the Pope. They made high-sounding promises and professions, and were ready enough to receive the money collected in their realms ; but this was all. Alfonso of Naples equipped a fleet, but sent it against Genoa instead of the Turks. The Duke of Burgundy was content with the renown he had already won as a crusader, and was busy in watching the French King. Charles VII. of France

Apathy of  
Europe.

at first refused to allow the Pope's Bulls to be published ; he was too busily engaged in watching England and Burgundy to have any care for foreign enterprises. At length Cardinal Alain of Avignon prevailed upon him to sanction the collection of tenths from the French clergy ; but the money was spent in building galleys at Avignon, which were afterwards used against Naples. Germany, England, and the Spanish kingdoms did nothing ; the Italian powers were too cautious to take any decided steps. Nowhere did the Papal summons meet with any real response.

In spite of the lukewarmness of Europe the Pope was not disheartened. From his sick chamber he urged the building of his galleys along the Ripa Grande. To obtain money he took the treasures of art which Nicolas V. had lavished on the Roman churches ; he even stripped the splendid bindings off the books which Nicolas V. had stored in the Vatican library. One day his eye fell on a salt-cellar of richly-chased gold work upon his table : 'Take it away,' he cried, 'take it for the Turkish war ; an earthenware salt-cellar is enough for me'.<sup>1</sup> The result of these efforts was that in May, 1456, a fleet of some sixteen galleys was anchored at Ostia. Calixtus appointed as his admiral Cardinal Scarampo, and bade him sail at once against the Turks. Sorely against his will, Scarampo was driven to undertake this hopeless task. His position was indeed pitiable. Under Eugenius IV. he had been the general of the Papal forces, and had ruled Rome at his will ; under Nicolas V. his power came to an end, and he indulged himself in ease and luxury. With a new Pope a new field was opened for his ambition, and he had been foremost in promoting the election of Calixtus III., believing that the old man would be a flexible instrument in his hands. But Calixtus fell under the power of his stalwart nephews, who looked with suspicion on Scarampo, and so poisoned the Pope's mind against him that he was forbidden

The Papal  
fleet sent  
against  
the Turks.  
1456.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Gabrielle of Verona to Capistrano, in Wadding, vi., 185.

to approach the Vatican. In this strait Scarampo made a bid for a renewal of favour by professing the greatest zeal for the Turkish war. Calixtus was mollified, and hoped that Scarampo would devote his own wealth to this purpose ; the nephews were not sorry for an excuse for removing him from Rome, and he was appointed admiral of the fleet. In vain Scarampo tried to evade this unpleasant duty ; in vain he urged that thirty galleys at least were needful before anything could be done. The obstinate and fiery Pope ordered him to set out at once, and threatened him with a judicial inquiry into his past conduct if he refused. Scarampo set sail and won back a few unimportant islands in the Ægean which had been captured by the Turks. He carried succours to the knights of Rhodes, and might pride himself on a few trivial successes. But his forces were inadequate to any serious undertaking, and Scarampo was neither a hero nor an enthusiast who cared to risk his life in a rash attempt. His only desire was to cruise about and make a decent show of activity. So far as he gave the islands a notion that they were being aided, he filled them with false security and unfounded hopes, which only tended to make them less self-reliant.

The only country which urged war successfully against the Turks was Hungary, which was bravely fighting for its national existence. There Fra Capistrano showed the power of religious zeal to stir a nation to a deep consciousness of the principles at stake. There also Cardinal Carvajal, as Papal legate, brought wisdom as well as devotion to aid the cause of patriotism. Carvajal had gone in 1455 to aid the crusading movement, and to reconcile the Emperor with his former ward, Ladislas. The reconciliation Carvajal soon found to be hopeless ; he turned his attention to the more important business of national defence, and helped the brave Governor of Hungary, John Hunyadi, who was resolved to withstand the Turkish onslaught. In April, 1456, came the news that the Sultan with a host of 150,000 was advancing along the

Siege of  
Belgrad  
by the  
Turks.  
April,  
1456.

Danube valley to the siege of Belgrad.<sup>1</sup> Hunyadi gathered such troops as he could and hastened to the relief of the threatened city. He besought Carvajal to remain in Buda, and gather forces to send to his support. King Ladislas, who was in Buda, went out hunting one morning with the Count of Cilly, but thought it more prudent not to return to such dangerous quarters, and made off to Vienna. The nobles and the King were alike afraid; the two churchmen, Carvajal and Capistrano, alone assisted the national hero.

When Hunyadi arrived the siege of Belgrad had already been carried on for some fourteen days, and the walls of the city were terribly shaken; but the sight of Hunyadi and Capistrano with their forces gave the defenders new courage. On the evening of July 21 Mahomet II. gave the signal for a storm. All the night and all the next day the battle raged desperately. Hunyadi and Capistrano stood on the top of a tower and surveyed the fight. Capistrano, with uplifted hands, bore the banner of the cross and a picture of S. Bernardino; from time to time shouted aloud the name of 'Jesus'. Hunyadi, with a soldier's eye, saw where help was needed, and rushed to aid the waverers till the fight was restored. More than once the infidels forced their way into the town, and were repelled by the valour of Hunyadi. As last an unexpected sally was made by a troop of Capistrano's crusaders; the Janissaries were preparing to attack them in the flank, when Hunyadi charged furiously to their aid, and the voice of Capistrano succeeded in rallying them. The Janissaries amazed at the onslaught fled to their tents; the Sultan, who had been slightly wounded by an arrow, gave the signal for retreat, and Belgrad was saved.<sup>2</sup>

Repulse  
of the  
Turks.

<sup>1</sup> See Cribelli, *De Expeditione in Turcos*, Muratori, xxiii., 57.

<sup>2</sup> The account of the battle of Belgrad is rendered obscure by the desire of many friars to elevate Capistrano into a second Joshua. Wadding, vol. vi., has an account by Giovanni da Tagliacozzo, and another by Nicola da Faro, both of which are full of Capistrano. See also Thurocz in Schwandtner, *Scriptores*, i., ch. 55. *Æn. Sylv., Hist. Bohem.*, ch. 65. *Hist. Fred.*, in Kollar, ii., 460 *Comment.*, 327.

There was a cry of triumph throughout Europe at the news, and Calixtus naturally expected that this success would rouse men's minds, and fire the lagging princes of Europe for the holy cause. But after the first glow of enthusiasm no one was moved to any decided action. In Hungary itself the heroes of Belgrad passed away, and it was doubtful who would take their place. A month after his victory, on August 11, John Hunyadi died of the plague. When he felt that death was approaching and preparations were being made to administer to him the Eucharist, he exclaimed, 'It is not fitting that the Lord should be brought to visit the servant'. He rose from his bed and prepared to seek the nearest church; his strength failed him, and he had to be carried. He confessed his sins, received the Eucharist, and died in the hands of the priests.<sup>1</sup> Capistrano was not long in following him; he died of fever on October 23, 1456.<sup>2</sup>

Death of  
Hunyadi  
and Capi-  
strano.  
1456.

The death of Hunyadi might fill the Hungarians with woe, but it was a source of relief to King Ladislas, and more especially to his guardian the Count of Cilly. Now that the mighty Vaivod was removed, the Count of Cilly hoped that he would be supreme over the young King and would assert over Hungary the royal power, freed from the trammels which Hunyadi had imposed. Ladislas and the Count of Cilly returned to Hungary, and even went to Belgrad to see the battle-field whose glory they had so basely refused to share. There one morning while the King was at mass the Hungarian nobles, led by Ladislas Corvinus, Hunyadi's son, fell upon the Count of Cilly and slew him. The King for some time dissembled his wrath, and the sons of Hunyadi accompanied him unsuspectingly to Buda, where they were seized, and Ladislas Corvinus was publicly beheaded as a traitor. The

Death of  
Ladislas  
of Hun-  
gary. No-  
vember,  
1457.

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Sylv., *Hist. Fred.*, p. 465.

<sup>2</sup> The letter of Giovanni da Tagliacozzo, in Wadding, vi., No. 85, is so animated by a desire to procure the canonisation of Capistrano that it passes into the fabulous.



King himself did not long enjoy his triumph ; on November 23, 1457, he died suddenly in Prag, whither he had gone to prepare for his marriage with Margaret of France.

The question of the Hungarian succession added to the confusion in Germany, where things were already sufficiently confounded. The Electoral party was still aiming at its own objects as against the feeble Emperor, and the death of Jacob, Archbishop of Trier, in May, 1456, altered the state of parties and introduced a new subject of discord. The Pfalzgraf now stood at the head of the opposition, and both parties struggled to obtain the vacant archbishopric. John of Baden and Rupert of the Pfalz were the candidates ; but the power of the Pope was sufficiently strong to secure the victory for John of Baden, son of the Markgraf Jacob, who was the Emperor's friend. The opposition now consisted of the Pfalzgraf and the Archbishops of Mainz and Köln. The collection of the tenths imposed by the Pope gave an occasion to raise again the old grievances of the German Church and to recur to the old policy of reform. The victory of Belgrad gave an opportunity of attacking the indolence of the Emperor, and the Electors sent Frederick III. an invitation to be present at a Diet to be held in Nürnberg on November 30, 1456, to consider the war against the Turk ; if he did not come, the Electors would take such steps as they thought best.

It was noticeable that this Diet, which was forbidden by the Emperor, was attended by a Papal legate. It would seem that the Electoral opposition counted on having the Pope on their side, if only they joined in war against the Turk and laid aside their anti-Papal measures. However that might be, the question of the private interests of the Electors overrode both the Turkish war and the reform of the Church. The discussions were purely political, and the Diet adjourned till March, 1457, when it again met at Frankfort, and again adjourned. Meanwhile, Albert of Brandenburg succeeded in forming a

Schemes  
of the  
Electoral  
opposition  
against  
Frederick  
III. 1456.

Anti-  
Papal  
policy of  
the Elec-  
toral op-  
position.



strong party in the Emperor's favour, and the opposition was driven to fall back. When baffled in its political objects it bethought itself of the question of Church reform. The Papacy was threatened with what it dreaded even more than a General Council—the establishment of a Pragmatic Sanction for Germany.

Proceedings were begun in secrecy by the Electors; but, as usual, information early reached the Curia, and preparations were made to resist the attempt. To Æneas Sylvius was left the organisation of the defence. Æneas had at length attained to the goal of his ambition. On December 18, 1456, the Pope had created him Cardinal with five others. It would seem that the College, steadfast in its opposition to the Pope and his nephews, resisted as long as it could this new creation. 'No Cardinals,' writes Æneas to one of the newly-elected dignitaries,<sup>1</sup> 'ever entered the College with greater difficulty than we; for rust had so spread over the hinges (cardines) that the door could not turn and open. Calixtus used battering rams and every kind of instrument to force it.' Æneas wrote at once to Frederick III. to thank him for his good offices. 'All men shall know,' he said, 'that I am a German rather than an Italian Cardinal.'<sup>2</sup> He soon proceeded to show the sense in which he meant that promise, by using all his skill to baffle the aspirations of Germany for freedom from ecclesiastical oppression.

About the grievances of Germany there was no doubt; but there was little earnestness in the means taken to have them redressed. The cry for reform was raised by the Electors when they had something to gain from the Pope: it gradually died away when a sop was thrown to the personal interests of the leaders of the movement. The proceedings were insincere even on the part of those who saw most forcibly the evils. The present leader of the movement was the Archbishop of

Æneas  
Sylvius  
made Cardinal.  
December, 1456.

Martin  
Mayr  
attacks  
the Papal  
policy in  
Germany.

<sup>1</sup> To the Cardinal of Pavia, *Ep.*, 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, 189.

Mainz; and his Chancellor, Martin Mayr, sounded the note of war in a letter to Æneas Sylvius, in which, after congratulating him on his Cardinalate, he put forth a powerful indictment of the Papal dealings with Germany.<sup>1</sup> The Pope, he said, observed neither the decrees of Constance nor Basel, nor the agreements of his predecessors, but set at nought the German nation. Elections to bishoprics were arbitrarily annulled, and reservations of every kind were made in favour of Cardinals and Papal secretaries. 'You yourself,' proceeded Mayr, 'have a general reservation of benefices to the value of 2000 ducats yearly in the provinces of Mainz, Trier, and Köln, an unprecedented and unheard-of grant.'<sup>2</sup> Grants of expectancies were habitually given, annates were rigorously exacted, nor was the Pope content simply with the sum that was due. Bishoprics were given not to the most worthy, but to the man who offered most. Indulgences were granted; Turkish tenths were imposed without the consent of the bishops, and the money went to the Pope. Cases that ought to be decided by the bishops were transferred to the Papal Court. In every way the German nation, once so glorious, was treated as a handmaid by the Pope. For years she had groaned over her slavery; her nobles thought that the time was come for her to assert her freedom.

The letter reads as though it were genuinely meant; but Æneas in his answer shows that he, at all events, had read between the lines.<sup>3</sup> In answering Mayr he asserted the Papal supremacy, rejected the de-

Answer of  
Cardinal  
Picco-  
lomini.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is given in the Basel edit. of 1571 of *Æneæ Sylvii Opera*, p. 1035.

<sup>2</sup> Æneas excuses himself for this in a letter to the Dean of Worms (*Ep.*, 356), dated July 22, 1457: 'Nos quidem supra xxiv. annos in Alamania servivimus et semper honorem illius nationis pro virili nostra promovimus, et nunc ad Cardinalatum quamvis insufficientes vocati id conamur quod illi nationi utile decorumque esse putamus. . . . Quibus in rebus non sumus arbitrati Germanicæ nationi futurum odiosum si beneficia in ea pro duobus millibus ducatorum in annuis redditibus obtineremus.'

<sup>3</sup> The dates of these letters are perplexing. The letter of Mayr, in all editions, bears the date of August 31, 1457: the answer of Æneas is dated August 8, 1457. There must be an error in the date of one of them.

crees of Basel, agreed that the Concordat should be observed, and suggested that if the Electors had any grievances on this point, they should at once send envoys to the Pope, who would be willing to grant redress. As regarded the Papal interference with elections, it was exercised in the way of judicial intervention, the need for which was caused by the ambition and greed of contending claimants, not by Papal rapacity. If money were paid to officers of the Curia, that was not the Pope's doing, but was caused by the ambition of the claimants, who were willing to do anything which might further their cause. Men were not all angels at Rome any more than in Germany; they took money when it was offered, but the Pope in his chamber decided according to justice. The Pope's officials might be extortionate, and the Pope greatly wished to check them; but he himself received nothing save what was due. Every one makes a grievance of parting with money, and always will do so. The complaint of the Bohemians against the Germans was the same as that of the Germans against the Papacy—that their money is taken out of the land. Yet Germany, from its connexion with the Papacy, had steadily grown in wealth and importance, and, in spite of its complaints, was richer than at any previous time. Æneas found it hard that Mayr complained of the provision made in his favour; he had lived and laboured in Germany so long that he did not think he was regarded as a stranger. However, he thanked Mayr for his personal offer to help him in realising his provision, and would be glad to know of any eligible benefices that might fall vacant. From the last sentence we see that Mayr in another letter had drawn a distinction between the German grievances and his own personal feelings; though theoretically he might regard his friend as an abuse, he was practically ready to help him.

Æneas showed that he interpreted this letter of Martin Mayr to mean that the Archbishop of Mainz had some conditions to propose to the Pope. He was not wrong in his conjecture, for early in September came a secretary of the Archbishop, who was em-

Proposal  
of the  
Arch-  
bishop of  
Mainz.

powered to negotiate, through Æneas Sylvius, for an alliance with Calixtus III.; the Archbishop of Mainz was ready to desert to the Pope's side if he received the right of confirmation of episcopal elections throughout Germany. Æneas answered in a letter to Mayr with a decided refusal, cleverly couched in courteous yet stinging language. He was glad to hear that the Archbishop no longer joined with the malignants against the Pope, but regretted to hear that he had been ill advised to ask for a right inherent in the Papacy, which none of his predecessors had enjoyed. No understanding was necessary between Christ's vicegerent and his subjects—all were bound to obey. He was sure that the modesty of the Archbishop had been improperly represented by this request, which he, for his part, could not venture to lay before a Pope so blameless, so wise, and so upright as was Calixtus III.<sup>1</sup>

Æneas might answer Mayr conclusively; yet the danger was threatening, and all the diplomatic power of Æneas was set to work to avert it. He assured the Archbishop of Mainz that the Pope was ready to grant all his smaller requests; he assured Mayr of his strong personal friendship, and of his desire to serve him in all ways. He wrote to Frederick III. in the name of Calixtus III. to supply him with an answer to the murmurs against the Papacy. He wrote to the King of Hungary, to the German Archbishops, to remind them of their duties to the Papacy. He stirred up the Cardinals Cusa and Carvajal to exert all their influence in Germany. Above all he wrote most confidentially to his former friends, the jurists and secretaries who occupied important posts at the different German Courts; Peter Knorr, the councillor of Albert of Brandenburg; Heinrich Leubing, Procopius of Rabstein, Heinrich Senftleben, and John Lysura, to whom he sent a cipher that communications might be carried on with greater secrecy.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, a new envoy was sent into Germany,

Papal  
measures  
against  
the Ger-  
man op-  
position.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of September 20, 1457, No. 338, ed. Basel,

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, 349, 320, ed. Basel,

a skilful theologian and diplomatist, Lorenzo Rovarella, who was laden with Bulls to the Emperor and the Electors. Æneas gave him instructions<sup>1</sup> to warn the Archbishops of Magdeburg, Trier, Riga and Salzburg to abstain from joining in any measures against the Pope. He was to urge the Duke of Bavaria to use his influence with the Pfalzgraf in the same direction; and as soon as possible was to proceed from the Emperor's Court to the Rhenish provinces, which were the seat of the anti-Papal movement. The princes were reminded that capitular elections were rarely in favour of junior members of princely families, and that only through the Papal intervention could these meet with their due rewards. The bishops were asked to consider that any blow aimed at the Papal dignity would eventually be disastrous to all episcopal authority as well. It was frankly admitted that there were abuses in the Papal Curia which the Pope desired to remedy. The German princes were asked to send their complaints to Rome, and trust to the Pope's judgment. A judicious mixture of cajolery and fair promises was applied to soothe the discontent of Germany.

Moreover, Æneas Sylvius took up his pen in defence of the Papacy, and expanded his letter to Mayr into a tractate 'On the Condition of Germany'.<sup>2</sup> He represented the Concordat as depending on the goodwill of the Pope, and expressed the Pope's desire for a reform of all abuses which could be shown to attach to the proceedings of the Curia. He discussed the complaints of the Germans with sophistical skill. He condemned generally the abuses complained of, denied their existence, and then plausibly accounted for a few exceptional cases. Grants in expectancy, he said, had never been made by the Pope, except at the earnest request of princes, and solely for the purpose of raising money for war against the Turk. Capitular elections have never been

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 344.

<sup>2</sup> 'De ritu, situ, conditione et moribus Germaniæ' in the Basel ed. of *Æneæ Sylvii Opera*, 1571, p. 1035, dated in a Viennese MS. February 1, 1458. Voigt, *Archiv für Kunde für Kunde Oesterreich. Geschichtsquellen*, xvi., 420.



annulled except on legal grounds, though he admitted that some legal ground had been discovered to annul every election brought before the Curia during the past two years. As to the complaints about indulgences, he said, pertinently enough, that the Papacy only offered indulgences to the faithful who showed their zeal for their religion by contributing to the expenses of the Turkish war. It was a free gift on their part; why should it be laid as an exaction to the Pope's charge? Germany had received from Rome more than she had given. Her complaint that money went from her to Rome was an old grievance, as old as human nature itself, and was never likely to disappear.

The pleadings of Æneas and the diplomacy of Rovarella had the effect in Germany of staying any definite proceedings for a time; and in German politics to pause was to lose the day. If for a brief space a strong party of the princes was united for a common object, it needed only a few months for some change to occur in the position of affairs which led to a new combination. The death of Ladislas of Hungary in November, 1457, caused great excitement in Germany. The dominions of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia were left in dispute, and most of the German princes were interested in the settlement. It is true that a Diet met at Frankfort in June, 1458, and agreed to send an embassy to the Pope; but this was felt to be a mere empty form. The Papacy gained its object of putting off the enactment of a Pragmatic Sanction for Germany, and the death of Calixtus III. in September removed him from further threats.

All these disturbances in Germany promised little for the favourite design of Calixtus III.—a great expedition against the Turks. Nothing was done for this object. Scarampo still cruised about the Ægean islands with the Papal fleet, and Scanderbeg in Albania showed how strong national feeling could supply courage to a handful of men contending against an invading host; but Europe did nothing. Calixtus III grew daily more indignant

Change of  
policy in  
Germany.  
Novem-  
ber, 1457.

Calixtus  
III. and  
Naples.



at the remissness of Alfonso of Naples, his former friend, in whose service he had entered Italy. His friendship rapidly turned to hostility when Alfonso sent his fleet against Genoa instead of joining with Scarampo. He opposed Alfonso's Italian policy, and strove to prevent the alliance with Milan by which Alfonso wished to secure the succession of his son to the Neapolitan kingdom. Alfonso had no child born in lawful wedlock; but his illegitimate son, Ferrante, had been legitimatised and recognised as successor to the Neapolitan kingdom by Eugenius IV. and Nicolas V. In spite of this, on Alfonso's death, on June 27, 1458, the impetuous Pope threatened to plunge Italy into war by refusing to acknowledge Ferrante, and claiming Naples as a fief of the Holy See.

It was not only anger at Alfonso's remissness to help in the Turkish war that prompted Calixtus III. to this step. The only object, which shared with crusading zeal the Pope's interest, was the enrichment of his nephews; and for this the vacancy of the Neapolitan throne gave an opening which he hastened to use. Besides the two nephews who had been elevated to the Cardinalate was a third, Don Pedro Luis de Borgia, on whom Calixtus III. was desirous to heap every worldly distinction. He made him Gonfalonier of the Church and Prefect of Rome; he committed to his hands all the castles in the neighbourhood of the city. He conferred on him also the Duchy of Spoleto, in spite of the protest of Capranica, who made himself the mouthpiece of the discontent of the Cardinals. Calixtus tried to rid himself of Capranica by sending him on distant embassies; when this failed he threatened to imprison him.<sup>1</sup> There was nothing that Calixtus would not do for his nephews, whom he identified still further with himself by bestowing on them his own family name and arms of Borgia. These three vigorous young men were all-powerful with the Pope, and the Cardinals who maintained an independent

Power of  
the Papal  
nephews.

<sup>1</sup> Poggio's *Vita Cardinalis Firmani*, in Baluze, *Miscell.*, iii., 290.

footing were either sent on distant embassies or compelled to leave the city. Carvajal and Cusa were at a safe distance in Germany; Scarampo, against his will, was sent to sea; Cardinal Orsini in vain tried to resist, and was driven to quit Rome. The other Cardinals of any importance, Estouteville, head of the French party, Piero Barbo, the nephew of Eugenius IV., even Prospero Colonna, thought it wise to be on good terms with the Borgia. Æneas Sylvius was too much accustomed to be on the winning side to find any difficulty in making friends with the powerful. With his wonted amiability he was ready to help Cardinal Borgia in his desire to enrich himself with Church preferment. He acted as his agent, and informed him of eligible vacancies during his absence. 'I keep an eye on benefices,' he writes on April 1, 1457, 'and will take care of you and myself. But we are deceived by false rumours. He whose death was reported from Nürnberg was here a few days ago, and dined with me. The Bishop of Toul, also, who was said to have died at Neustadt, has returned safe and sound to Burgundy. I will, however, be watchful for any vacancy; but you have the best proctor in his Holiness.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus watchful and thus supported, the Borgia ruled Rome and filled the city with their creatures. Dependents of their house flocked from Spain to share the booty, and their party was known by the name of 'the Catalans'. All the offices of the city were put in the hands of these strangers, who connived at robbery and murder by the members of their own faction. One day Capranica was asked for alms on the bridge of S. Angelo by a beggar, who pleaded that he had escaped from the Catalans. 'You are better off than I am,' answered the Cardinal, 'for you have escaped, while I am still in their hands.'<sup>2</sup>

The death of Alfonso offered Calixtus III. an opportunity of exalting his nephew Pedro still higher. By claiming the

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 257.

<sup>2</sup> This story is told both by Vespasiano, *Vita del Cardinale Capranica*, and by Poggio, in Baluze, *Miscell.*, iii., 290.

kingdom of Naples he might at least get hold of some portion which might be made into a fief for Pedro's benefit. On July 31 he conferred on him the Vicariate of Benevento and Terracina.

It was not, however, to be expected that Ferrante would flee before the Papal threats. He summoned a meeting of the Neapolitan nobles, who accepted him as their king; he appealed from the Pope to a future Council, and prepared to defend himself against an attack. He claimed only the kingdom of Naples; on Alfonso's death without lawful issue Aragon and Sicily passed to his brother John of Navarre. Even without the Pope's interference there were other claimants of the throne of Naples. John of Anjou revived the claims of his house; and Charles of Biana, son of John Navarre, was prepared to maintain his right of legitimate succession to Alfonso. Calixtus III. might disturb the peace of Southern Italy; but he was by no means strong enough to secure his own success. His policy could only lead to the introduction of foreign invaders, and was in consequence strongly opposed by the far-seeing Duke of Milan, whom Calixtus III. vainly tried to win over to his side. Sforza answered, that the settlement made under the auspices of Nicolas V. had met with the approval of all the Italian Powers, and he for his part would fight in defence of Ferrante, rather than see the concord of Italy disturbed.<sup>1</sup>

Opposition of Calixtus III. to the succession of Ferrante of Naples. June, 1458.

This answer of Sforza was a bitter disappointment to the old Pope. But the end of his plans was approaching. He was seized with a fever, and it was clear that his end was drawing near. The Orsini began to take up arms against the hated Catalans. The nephew Pedro grew more fearful for himself as he saw his uncle on his deathbed. He judged it better to beat a prudent retreat while there was yet time. He sold the castle of S. Angelo to the Cardinals for 20,000 ducats, and on August

Death of Calixtus III. August 6, 1458.

<sup>1</sup> Simoneta, *Vita Sfortiæ*, in Mur., xxi., 686.

5 left the city with his Catalan friends. The Orsini occupied the gates and watched the roads to prevent his escape; only by the friendly aid of Cardinal Barbo did he manage to flee, in the darkness of the night. Barbo led him to the Tiber, where he took boat and made his way to Civita Vecchia.<sup>1</sup> Next day, August 6, Calixtus III. died. The Orsini at once plundered the houses of the Catalans and all that bore the arms of the Borgia. Calixtus was buried with little respect in the vault of S. Peter's, and was followed to the grave only by four priests.

The pontificate of Calixtus III. was a violent reaction against the policy of Nicolas V. The energy of Nicolas V. and the greatness of his schemes had naturally caused some dismay among the Cardinals, who heard the murmurs of Germany and feared the results of localising the Papacy too exclusively in Rome. Under the influence of this feeling they elected a stranger, whose advanced age was a guarantee that his pontificate would only be a temporary breathing space, in which they might recover from the impetuosity of Nicolas V. But the reaction of Calixtus III. was too violent and too complete. He not only checked the works of his predecessor; he allowed them to fall into decay. Had he continued in any degree the buildings of his predecessor, the schemes of Nicolas V. might have been slowly realised in the future side by side with other objects of Papal interest. But the entire suspension of the works by Calixtus III. was fatal. The scheme of the Renaissance, instead of advancing to gradual completion, was laid aside to be superseded by the more splendid, though less thorough, plan of a later age. Rome, that might have borne the impress of the calm strength and simplicity of Nicolas V. and Alberti, is stamped with the more passionate magnificence of Julius II. and Bramante. No institution, least of all an institution like the Papacy, admits of a sudden change of policy, or

Results of  
the pon-  
tificate of  
Calixtus  
III.

<sup>1</sup> Cannesio, *Vita Pauli II.*, in Mur., iii., pt. 2, 1003.

can without loss direct its energies entirely into a different channel. While we may admire the zeal of Calixtus III. for a crusade against the Turks, we must regret that it was so exclusive as to sacrifice with impatience all the labours of Nicolas V.

Even Calixtus III. did not entirely abandon some care for the architecture of Rome; but his wilfulness is shown in the works which he did, no less than in those which he left undone. He restored the Church and the palace of SS. Quattro Coronati, because from the Church he took his title as Cardinal, and the palace had served as his residence. He restored also the Church of S. Calixtus, in honour of his Papal name; and the Church of S. Sebastiano Fuori, because it was situated over the Catacombs of S. Calixtus. Besides these, he did some repairs to the Church of S. Prisca, and began a new ceiling in S. Maria Maggiore. The few painters who remained in Rome in the days of Calixtus III. were employed for the purpose of painting standards to be borne against the Turks.<sup>1</sup>

If Calixtus III. was thus inconsiderate and narrow-minded in despising the work of his predecessor, the same qualities stood in the way of his success in the object which was foremost to himself. It must always be an honour to the Papacy that, in a great crisis of European affairs, it asserted the importance of a policy which was for the interest of Europe as a whole. Calixtus III. and his successor deserve, as statesmen, credit which can be given to no others of the politicians of the time. The Papacy, by summoning Christendom to defend the ancient limits of Christian civilisation against the assaults of heathenism, was worthily discharging the chief secular duty of its office. Of the zeal and earnestness of Calixtus III. there was no question; but the lethargy of Europe prevented him accomplishing much. Moreover, the zeal of Calixtus was displayed by passionate impetuosity which disregarded the

<sup>1</sup> See Müntz, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i., 196, etc.

means in its desire to reach the end. All that Bulls, exhortations, and indulgences could do, Calixtus did; but he trusted merely to words, and took no means to remedy the evils which kept Europe suspicious and divided and prevented the possibility of combination for a common object. He did not try to win the confidence of Germany by wise measures of ecclesiastical reform, which might have formed the beginning of a political reorganisation. He did not even in Italy strive to maintain the pacific spirit which he found. Under the influence of his greedy nephews the Papacy again threatened to be a centre of territorial aggression.

The impetuosity of youth has passed into a common phrase. The history of the Papacy gives many examples of the no less dangerous impetuosity of old age. Men of decided opinions, who come to power late in life, expend on accomplishing their cherished desires the accumulated passion of a lifetime. Inflexible, overbearing, inconsiderate, Calixtus III. pursued his own plans, and seemed to form no part of the life around him. He brooked no contradiction; he saw no one who was not prepared to re-echo his opinions; he had no care of anything outside the circle which he had marked for himself. The vow which he made on his election was one of the ornaments of his chamber;<sup>1</sup> it was ever before his eyes and ever in his thoughts. He left at his death 150,000 ducats, which he had stored up for the Turkish war.

Personally Calixtus III. was a man of rigid piety and of simple life. He was largely charitable and attentive to all religious duties. Little could be said against him save that he was obstinate and irritable; yet he inspired little affection and accomplished little. His weakness left more permanent results than did his strength. The ardour of his zeal for

<sup>1</sup> Müntz (*Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i., 213) gives from the Roman Archives an inventory of the furniture of the rooms occupied by Calixtus III. in the Vatican. Amongst them we find 'Item votum domini Calisti in una carta magna'.



Christendom is forgotten; the evil deeds of his nephew Rodrigo and his race have made the name of Borgia a by-word, and Calixtus III. is remembered as the founder of a race whose actions marked the Papacy with irretrievable disgrace.

## CHAPTER VI.

PIUS II. AND THE CONGRESS OF MANTUA.

1458—1460.

ON August 10 the eighteen Cardinals who were in Rome entered the Conclave in the Vatican Palace. The first day was spent in preliminaries. The next day was devoted to framing the solemn agreement, which since the death of Martin V. had been subscribed by all the Cardinals before a Papal election. It contained the chief points to which the College wished to bind the future Pope, and so expressed the desire of the electors to limit, while there was yet time, the absolute power of the infallible ruler whom they were about to set over the Church. On the present occasion the points insisted on were the prosecution of the Turkish war, respect for the wishes of the Cardinals in new creations, proper provision for the Cardinals, due consultation of the College in all important matters, care for the States of the Church, and such like matters.<sup>1</sup> On the third day the first scrutiny was taken, and it was found that Cardinals Piccolomini and Calandrini had each received five votes, while no other candidate received more than three. The first scrutiny, however, was generally of little consequence, and merely served as a means of opening private discussions among the Cardinals. It soon appeared that the French Cardinal Estouteville, by his wealth and magnificence, had gained a

The Con-  
clave.  
August  
11-18,  
1458.

<sup>1</sup> In Raynaldus, 1458, No. 5.

considerable following, and could count with certainty on six votes. A little private consultation showed that the real issue was the election of Estouteville or an Italian. Estouteville had many arguments to use in his own favour. 'Will you take Æneas,' he said, 'who is both gouty and poor? How can one who is poor and infirm govern the Church? Perhaps he will transfer the Papacy to his beloved Germany, or introduce his heathenish poetry into the statutes of the Church. Calandrini is incapable even of governing himself. I am an older Cardinal than they; of the royal race of France, rich, and with many friends; my election will vacate many benefices which will be divided among you.' The adherents of Estouteville met in secrecy<sup>1</sup> and bound themselves to secure his election. They counted on eleven votes, and regarded the election as won; already Estouteville had promised them the due rewards of their zeal in his cause.

But at midnight Calandrini visited the cell of Piccolomini. 'To-morrow,' he said, 'Estouteville will be elected. I counsel you to rise and offer him your vote so as to win his favour. I know from my experience of Calixtus III. how ill it is to have the Pope for one's enemy.' Æneas answered that it was against his conscience to do so; he could not vote for one whom he considered unworthy. But Æneas was disturbed in his mind, and early in the morning visited Cardinal Borgia to see if he was pledged. Borgia said that he did not wish to be on the losing side, and had received from Estouteville a document promising to confirm him in the office of Vice-Chancellor, which he had held under Calixtus III. 'Are you not rash in trusting to the promise of an enemy to your nation?' said Æneas. 'Do you not know that the Chancery is also promised to the Cardinal of Avignon? which promise is the new Pope most likely to keep?' Next Æneas sought Cardinal Castiglione and

<sup>1</sup> Æn. Syl., in Meuschen, *Ceremonialia*, 'in latrinis'; but this was in mediæval times a spacious hall, with only a row of cells at one side for its ostensible purpose.

asked him if he had promised his vote to Estouteville. Castiglione made a like answer; he did not wish to stand alone, since the affair was as good as settled. Æneas recalled the miseries of the Schism, the dangers of a French Papacy, and the disgrace which it would bring on Italy: had they escaped the Catalans only to fall before the French? Æneas next met Cardinal Barbo, who was equally anxious that some decisive step should be taken to defeat the schemes of Estouteville's party. Barbo was one of those who had entertained hopes of his own election; he determined to lay them aside, and try to gain a majority for the best candidate of an Italian party. He invited the Italian Cardinals to assemble in the cell of the Cardinal of Genoa, and six answered his summons. He laid before them the condition of affairs, appealed to their national sentiment, exhorted them to lay aside all personal feelings, and proposed Piccolomini as their candidate. All agreed except Æneas, who modestly declared himself unworthy of the honour.

Soon after this the public proceedings of the Conclave began with the mass, which was followed by a scrutiny. Estouteville, pale with excitement, was one of the three Cardinals whose office it was to guard the chalice, while the rest advanced in order and dropped into it their votes. As Æneas approached the altar Estouteville whispered, 'Æneas, I commend myself to you'. 'Do you commend yourself to a poor creature like me?' answered Æneas, as he dropped his vote. Then the chalice was emptied on a table, and the scrutineers read out the votes: when this had been done Estouteville announced that Æneas had eight votes. 'Count again,' said Æneas, and Estouteville was obliged to confess that he had made a mistake; and Æneas had nine votes, and he himself had six. It was clear that, with nine votes out of eighteen, Æneas had won the day; only three votes were wanting, and the Cardinals remained seated to try the method of accession. 'All sat,' says Æneas, 'pale and silent, as though rapt by the Holy Ghost. No one spoke or

Election  
of Æneas  
Sylvius  
Piccolo-  
mini, Pope  
Pius II.  
August 19,  
1458.

opened his mouth, or moved any part of his body save his eyes, which rolled from place to place. The silence was wonderful as all waited, the inferiors expecting their superiors to begin.<sup>1</sup> At last Borgia arose and said, 'I accede to the Cardinal of Siena'. The conversation of Æneas about the Vice-Chancellorship had no doubt shown Borgia which way his interest lay. Æneas had now ten votes, and in a desperate attempt to prevent the election being made that day Isidore of Russia and Torquemada rose and left the Conclave. No one followed, and they soon returned. Then Cardinal Tebaldo rose and said, 'I also accede to the Cardinal of Siena'. One vote only was wanting, which Prospero Colonna rose to give. Estouteville and Bessarion upbraided him for his desertion of their cause, and seizing his arms tried to lead him from the Conclave; but Colonna loudly called out, 'I also accede to the Cardinal of Siena, and make him Pope'. The deed was done; the intrigues were at an end. In a moment the Cardinals were prostrate at the feet of the new Pope. Then they resumed their seats, and formally confirmed the election.

Bessarion, in the name of the adherents of Estouteville, addressed Æneas. 'We are pleased with your election, which we doubt not comes from God; we think you worthy of the office, and always held you so. Our only reason for not voting for you was your bodily infirmity: we thought that your gouty feet might be a hindrance to that activity which the perils from the Turks might require. It was this that led us to prefer the Cardinal of Rouen. Had you been strong in body there was no one whom we would have chosen before you. But the will of God is now our will.' 'You have a better opinion of us,' answered Æneas, 'than we have of ourselves; for you only find us defective in the feet, we feel our imperfections to be more widely spread. We are conscious of innumerable failings which might have excluded us from this office; we are conscious

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Commentarii*, p. 30.

of no merits to justify our election. We would judge ourselves entirely unworthy, did we not know that the voice of two-thirds of the Sacred College is the voice of God, which we may not disobey. We approve your conduct in following your conscience and judging us insufficient. You will all be equally acceptable to us; for we ascribe our election, not to one or another, but to the whole College, and so to God Himself, from whom comes every good and perfect gift.'

Æneas then put off his robes, and assumed the white tunic of the Pope. He was asked what name he would bear, and with a Virgilian reminiscence of 'Pius Æneas,' answered 'Pius'. Then he swore to observe the agreement entered into by the Cardinals at the beginning of the Conclave. He was led to the altar, and there received the reverence of the Cardinals. Then the election was announced to the people from a window. The attendants of the Conclave plundered the cell of the newly-elected Pope, and the mob outside rushed to pillage his house, which they did with such completeness that they tore even the marble from the walls. Unfortunately, he was one of the poorest Cardinals; but part of the mob professed to mistake the cry of 'Il Sanese' for 'Il Genovese,' and plundered the house of Cardinal Flisco as well.

The election of Cardinal Piccolomini was popular with the Romans: the citizens laid aside their arms, with which they were provided in case of a tumult, and went to S. Peter's. Pius II. was placed on the high altar, and received the adoration of the Cardinals, the clergy, and the people. At nightfall the magistrates of the city came on horseback, bearing blazing torches, to pay their respects to the new Pope. On September 3, he was crowned in S. Peter's, and rode in solemn procession to the Lateran, where he experienced the unruliness of the Roman mob, who, according to old custom, seized the horse and trappings of the Pope. So eager were they for their booty that they made a rush too soon. Swords were drawn

Corona-  
tion of  
Pius II.  
Septem-  
ber 3, 1458.



in the fight for the plunder, and the crippled Pope was in danger of his life in the confusion. He was, however, happily saved from hurt, and entertained the Cardinals, the foreign ambassadors, and chief citizens at a banquet.

The election of Pius II. gave general satisfaction in Italy, where the new Pope was well known to most of the princes and republics. His reputation for learning and his diplomatic ability made every one look upon him with respect. The French, however, felt aggrieved at the rejection of Estouteville, and the opponents of the Emperor in Germany looked with suspicion on one whose cleverness they knew too well. To Pius II. himself his elevation was a source of mingled joy and fear. True, he was ambitious, vain, desirous of glory; true, he had schemed and plotted for his own advancement, and had made success the great object of his life. But, when success came at last, he shrank from the responsibilities of which he well knew the extent. He was no inexperienced enthusiast who might dream that he had the future in his hands. Though only fifty-three years old, Pius II. was already old in body, racked by the gout, suffering from gravel, afflicted by the beginnings of asthma. He knew full well how useless it was in the existing condition of Europe to hope for any great opportunities which he might use to leave his mark upon the world. He had reached the height of his ambition, and saw nothing but difficulties before him. When in the first moments after his election his friends thronged round him with joyful congratulations, he burst into tears. 'You may rejoice,' he said, 'because you think not of the toils and the dangers. Now must I show to others what I have so often demanded from them.'<sup>1</sup> During all the festivities of his accession his face was careworn and melancholy.

When Pius II. reviewed the condition of Europe he had no hesitation in deciding that the chief object of his policy

Feelings  
of Pius II.  
on his  
election.

<sup>1</sup> Campanus, *Vita Pii II.*, Mur., iii., pt. 2, p. 974.

must be the same as that of his predecessor, the prosecution of war against the Turk. What Calixtus III. had urged with the unreflecting fanaticism of a recluse, Pius II. would press with the wisdom of a statesman. Already Pius II. had identified himself with the cause of the crusade ; his speeches, his writings, had advocated it ; his knowledge of European politics convinced him of its absolute necessity. But he saw that, to ensure success, the crusade must be undertaken by the whole of Christendom, and Christendom must be united for this purpose by wise management on the part of the Pope. Accordingly, Pius II. determined to proceed with stately deliberation, and put the project on its proper footing. He lost no time in laying before the Cardinals a plan for a general conference of the princes of Europe, to be held under the Pope's presidency. But the Cardinals were half-hearted ; the majority of them were content to stay in Rome and enjoy themselves, and shrank from the trouble of a serious undertaking. They raised difficulties about the place of the proposed conference ; the princes of Europe could not well be summoned to Rome ; there was a danger, if an assembly were held in France or Germany, that it might turn into a Council, whose very name was hateful. Pius II. pointed out that the state of his health gave him an excuse for refusing to cross the Alps, while he was ready to show his zeal by going to some place in North Italy, so as to meet the European representatives half way : he proposed Udine or Mantua as suitable places for the Congress. The Cardinals reluctantly consented ; and Pius II. hastened to publish his resolution to an assembly of ambassadors and prelates in S. Peter's. There were present eleven Cardinals, three archbishops, twenty-nine bishops, and the ambassadors of Castile, Denmark, Portugal, Naples, Burgundy, Milan, Modena, Venice, Florence, Siena, and Lucca. To them Pius II. announced his plan ; though an old man and infirm, he would brave the dangers of crossing the Apennines to confer with the princes of Europe on the step to be taken to avert the ruin of Chris-

Crusading  
policy of  
Pius II.

tendom : he asked for their opinion and advice. For a time there was silence. Then Bessarion begged the ambassadors to speak. One after another they praised the zeal of the Pope, and asserted the good intentions of their several states. Pius II. was pleased with these expressions of assent, and invited all to a public consistory to be held in three days' time, on October 13. There a solemn summons to a Congress to be held on June 1, 1459, was read to the assembly,<sup>1</sup> and a few days afterwards Pius II. sent letters to the various kings of Christendom, urging their presence at this great undertaking.

But before he could proceed to a Congress, Pius II. had a political question to settle nearer home. Calixtus III. had refused to recognise the succession of Ferrante in Naples, and had claimed the kingdom as a fief of the Holy See. He had not conferred it on any claimant, and any scheme that he might have had of establishing his nephew in Naples was at once overthrown by his death. An envoy of Ferrante had been sent to the Cardinals during the vacancy; Pius II. found the Neapolitan question pressing for his decision. Nor was the question one which could be decided easily on general grounds. The condottiere general, Jacopo Piccinino, had occupied in Ferrante's name Assisi, Gualdo, and Nocera. The States of the Church were in confusion, and in many cities Pius II. had to buy off the Catalan governors, and assert his rule with difficulty. The presence of Piccinino was a continual menace.

Moreover, the general lines of the Papal policy towards Naples had been somewhat obscured by the predecessors of Pius II. The Papacy had, on the whole, favoured the Angevin party. Eugenius IV. had been the constant opponent of Alfonso, and Nicolas V. had only recognised him for the sake of peace. The question which Calixtus III. had opened was full of difficulty. Pius II. might well

Affairs in  
Naples.  
1458.

<sup>1</sup> It is given by Cribelli in Mur., xxiii., 70.

doubt the wisdom of supporting in Naples the line of Anjou, and introducing into the neighbourhood of the Papacy the influence of the country of the Pragmatic Sanction. Pius II. himself had known and liked the scholarly Alfonso, and his own sympathies were probably on the side of Ferrante. But the French party was strong among the Cardinals, and the envoys of the French King laid before the Pope the impolicy of offending a prince so powerful as their master. As the Archbishop of Marseilles pleaded in this strain, Pius II. suddenly asked him if René of Anjou were ready to drive out Piccinino from the States of the Church. The Archbishop was driven to answer 'No'. 'Then what are we to expect from one who cannot help us in our straits?' said the Pope. 'We need a king in Naples who can protect both himself and us.'

So Pius II. proceeded to make the best bargain he could with Ferrante. When Ferrante wished to negotiate, the Pope roundly answered that he was no merchant to barter with. On October 17 an agreement was made that Pius II. should free Ferrante from all ecclesiastical censures, and invest him with the kingdom of Naples, 'without prejudice to another's right'. The Pope did not venture to decide entirely against the Angevin claims, but merely recognised Ferrante as the actual king. Ferrante undertook to pay the Pope a yearly tribute, and recall Piccinino from the States of the Church within a month. Benevento, which had been granted as a personal fief to Alfonso, was restored to the Church; but Terracina, which was held in the same way, was to be retained by Ferrante for ten years. The French Cardinals still opposed the agreement, and refused to sign the Bull in which it was embodied. Piccinino was driven to leave the States of the Church, and Pius II. sent Cardinal Orsini to crown Ferrante in Naples.

When peace had thus been restored to some extent at home, Pius II. proceeded with the preparations for his departure to the Congress. The Romans were ill pleased to

Pius II.  
recognises  
Ferrante  
as king.  
October,  
1458.

see the Pope leave his city. Some exclaimed that he was going to take the Papacy to Germany; others declared that he would go no farther than Siena, and there would devote himself to the adornment of his native land. All joined in lamenting the loss which the city would sustain from the departure of the Curia. They deprecated the danger to which the Pope was about to expose his life, and foretold that his departure would be the signal for disturbances in the Papal States. To allay their anxiety Pius II. left some Cardinals and officials of the Curia behind him, that Rome might not be entirely deprived of its glory; he appointed the Cardinal Nicolas of Cusa Vicar during his absence. He decreed that if he died away from Rome the election of his successor should still take place in that city after a due delay for the return of the absent Cardinals. He granted their ancient privileges to the cities in the Papal States, and remitted their tribute for three years. Finally, he summoned the Roman barons, and administered to them an oath that they would keep the peace during his absence. As a token of his zeal for the crusading cause, he founded a new military order, the order of S. Mary of Bethlehem. But the day for military orders was gone, and this revival existed only in name. After these precautions he set out from Rome on January 22, 1459, accompanied by six Cardinals—Calandrini, Borgia, Alain, Estouteville, Barbo, and Colonna.

Departure  
of Pius II.  
for the  
Congress  
of Man-  
tua. Janu-  
ary, 1459.

The journey of Pius II. was like a triumphal progress. It was long since a Pope had been seen by any of the dwellers in the Papal States. Throngs of people welcomed him wherever he went with shouts of rejoicing and expressions of goodwill, which afforded sincere enjoyment to Pius II., who fully appreciated the dignity of his office.

At Narni the crowd thronged round his horse, and strove to carry off the baldachino held over his head. Swords were drawn in the struggle, and Pius II. thought it wiser in the future to be carried in a litter, so as to avoid such unseemly brawls. At

Pius II.  
visits Cor-  
signano.  
February,  
1459.



Spoleto he was entertained for four days by his sister Catarina. Thence he passed through Assisi to Perugia, where he stayed three weeks.<sup>1</sup> He was loth to pass by his native place, and leave Siena unvisited; but there was a conflict between the Pope and the government of Siena, where the popular party were in the ascendant, and had driven out the nobles. They had tried to pacify the Pope by admitting the Piccolomini to office, but Pius II. demanded the restitution of the nobles. The popular party gave way a little at the Pope's pressure, and relaxed the rigour of their proscription, but they regarded the Papal visit with undisguised suspicion. From Perugia Pius II. crossed the lake Trasimene, and entered the Siennese territory at Chiusi. He turned aside to visit his native place, Corsignano, a little town perched among the hills, which he had left as a poor boy, and now entered as the head of Christendom. He experienced the same sad feelings that attend every one who revisits the haunts of his youth. His father and mother were dead; those whom he had known were mostly confined to bed through sickness; faces which he remembered flushed with the pride of youth were unrecognisable in the deformity of old age.<sup>2</sup> Here, in the little church, the Pope celebrated mass on February 22, the festival of S. Peter's installation. He resolved to honour his native place by elevating it to a bishopric under the name of Pienza. He ordered workmen to be collected to build there a cathedral and a bishop's palace.

Pius II.  
at Siena.  
February  
—March,  
1459.

After a sojourn of three days Pius II. left Corsignano for Siena. There he stayed nearly two months, and strove to propitiate the people by presenting the city with the golden rose on Palm Sunday. At last he brought before the magistrates his political object,

<sup>1</sup> Campanus, in Mur., iii., pt. 2, p. 975.

<sup>2</sup> *Pii II. Comment.*, 44: 'Major pars æqualium e vita excesserat, et qui adhuc superabant, gravati senio morbisque domi detinebantur; et hi qui sese exhibebant mutati vultibus vix agnosci poterant, exhausti viribus et deformes'.



and urged on them the restoration of the excluded nobles. After some opposition they agreed to admit them to a quarter of some offices and an eighth of others. Pius II. was not satisfied with such a small concession, but thanked them for what they had done, and said that he hoped on his way back to hear that they had granted more. At Siena Pius II. received the first ambassadors from the powers beyond Italy, who sent to offer their obedience to the new Pope. There came representatives of the Kings of Castile, Aragon, Portugal, and Matthias Corvinus, the new King of Hungary. All were received with due state, and were answered by Pius with his wonted eloquence. The Imperial ambassadors were at Florence, and when they heard that the envoys of Matthias Corvinus had been received by the Pope, raised difficulties about presenting themselves, as Frederick III. still urged his own claims on Hungary, and refused to recognise Matthias. But Pius II. had himself given the Imperial envoys an example not to be too careful about their master's dignity in dealing with the Papacy. They were readily mollified by the assurance of the Pope that in such formal matters he only dealt with the existing state of things, and treated as king him who held the kingdom. They came to Siena, and gave to Pius II. the obedience of the Emperor. Pius II., on his part, could not do less than confirm to the Emperor the provisions of the secret agreement which he himself had negotiated, and for which the German obedience had been sold to Eugenius IV.

To Siena came also the envoys of George Podiebrad, who had been elected King of Bohemia, and their coming brought before Pius II. the chief difficulty which he had to face. Podiebrad, as governor of Bohemia under Ladislas, had pursued with firmness and sagacity a successful policy in uniting Bohemia and bringing back order into the distracted country. He was, above all things, a statesman who appreciated the exact bearings of the situation. He saw that Bohemia

Policy of  
George  
Podie-  
brad, King  
of Bo-  
hemia.

must be united on a basis which would allow the various factions to live peaceably together, and would also free the country from its isolation from the rest of Christendom. He aimed at bringing about this union on the basis of moderate utraquism. He overthrew the fanatical Taborites, and reduced their stronghold. He wished to be on good terms with the Papacy; but he knew that Bohemia would not be content with less than a faithful observance of the Compacts made with the Council of Basel, and the recognition of Rokycana as Archbishop of Prag. But the Compacts had been wrung out of the Council by necessity, and the restored Papacy had no idea of frankly accepting them. They were in its eyes a temporary compromise to be withdrawn as soon as possible. If Podiebrad hoped to draw the Papacy to toleration, the Papacy hoped to bring back Bohemia to submission. Cusa, Carvajal, Capistrano, and Æneas Sylvius had tried all that diplomatic skill and religious enthusiasm could do, and all had failed against the resolute determination of the Bohemians. Rokycana was still unrecognised, the Compacts were still treated as temporary provisions, while Bohemia under Podiebrad was again organising itself into the strongest kingdom in Eastern Europe.

So long as Ladislas lived the Papacy had hopes that his influence might grow with years. But on his death the election of Podiebrad to the Bohemian crown made the Bohemian question important both to the Papacy and to Germany. To Germany it meant the destruction of German influence in Bohemia, and the rise of a power which might become the arbiter in the affairs of Germany itself. Podiebrad, conscious of the difficulties in his way, desired a legitimate position as King of Bohemia, accepted by Utraquists and Catholics alike. Hence he shrank from receiving the crown at the hands of Rokycana, and wished for recognition by the Pope. Calixtus III., in his crusading zeal, was willing to put great confidence in one who could put an army in the field to war

Recog-  
nition of  
George by  
Calixtus  
III. 1458.

against the Turk. Podiebrad led the Pope to suppose that he would make greater concessions than he intended. He applied to Carvajal, the Papal legate in Hungary, to send two bishops for his coronation. The request could not well be refused; nor could Carvajal expect from Podiebrad an open abjuration, which would have alienated his people. He charged the bishops, however, not to crown him before he had sworn to root out heresy and establish the Catholic faith in Bohemia. King George managed to have the oath couched in general terms, without any direct mention of the Compacts or of the utraquist faith. He swore secretly before the bishops to bring back his people from their errors to the faith and worship of the Catholic Church. Then he was crowned on May 7, 1458.

Carvajal and Calixtus III. recognised in George a true, though secret, friend of the Church, and believed in his sincerity and good intentions. George wrote to Calixtus proffering his aid against the Turks, and Calixtus in reply addressed him not only as king, but as his dear son. The letter of Calixtus was spread far and wide by George, and cut away the ground from those who would have opposed him as a heretic. The German and Catholic provinces of Silesia, Lusatia, and Moravia, which were ready to rebel, returned to their obedience. When it was too late the eyes of Calixtus III. were opened, and he died with the knowledge that he had been deceived.<sup>1</sup>

In this condition Pius II. found the Bohemian question. He was not, like Calixtus III., without experience of Bohemia or of George. He knew that the King's oath was not meant by him to signify a withdrawal from the Compacts; but he knew that an open quarrel with Bohemia would hinder his plan of a Congress, and he hoped through the Congress to put the Papacy in a position which would enable it to deal with Bohemia in the future. He judged it best to affect to look on George's

Policy of  
Pius II.  
towards  
Bohemia.

<sup>1</sup> *Cardinalis Papiensis Commentarii*, p. 430.

oath as a promise of complete submission. He sent him a summons to the Congress, and gave him the title of king; but sent the summons through the Emperor, saying that Bohemia was a fief of the Empire, and that the Pope recognised as king whoever the Emperor recognised. Frederick III., embarrassed by Hungary and Austria, began to look on George as a possible ally. He admitted him to a conference near Vienna in September, 1458, and so gave him moral support. As Pius had intended, the Emperor sent on the summons to George, who at once published it. The Silesian League, which still opposed George's accession, began slowly to melt away before this proof of his success. Breslau, animated by Catholic zeal, still held out, and sent envoys to Pius II. at Siena, complaining of his recognition of George, as harmful to Catholicism. Thither came also the ambassadors of George, professing the obedience of their master to the Pope. Pius II. was sorely embarrassed. He could not receive the obedience of a King who had not yet disavowed his heresy: he could not refuse his support to those who were resisting him in the name of the Catholic faith. Accordingly, he attempted a compromise. In a secret consistory he received the personal obedience of George, but declined to give him the rank of a king till he had made public profession of Catholicism. The envoys of Breslau he praised for their zeal, and promised to find a remedy for their grievances; he hoped that George would show himself true to his oath to the Papacy, and prove himself a Christian king; otherwise he would have to take other measures. For a time the Pope's answer satisfied both parties. George used this period of truce to increase his prestige in Germany. In April he held a conference at Eger, to settle territorial disputes about the possessions of Bohemia, Brandenburg, and Saxony; by his conciliatory policy he gained recognition at the hands of his German neighbours, and also entered into a perpetual peace and alliance with Saxony and Brandenburg. On July 30 Frederick III. met George at Brünn, and in return for promises

of help against Matthias of Hungary, conferred on him the Imperial investiture of the Bohemian kingdom. The policy of George had so far succeeded in establishing his power on a legitimate basis. It remained for Pius II. to see if his Congress could exercise any influence on the restoration of Catholicism in Bohemia.

After a stay of nearly two months in Siena Pius II. set out on April 23 for Florence, whither he was escorted by the young Galeazzo, son of Francesco Sforza, of Milan, as well as by several vassals of the Church. In Florence, where he stayed for eight days in the cloister of S. Maria Novella, the Pope received all honour and magnificent tokens of respect. But Cosimo de' Medici kept his bed on the plea of sickness, and the visit of Pius II. had no political fruit. From Florence he passed to Bologna, the rebellious vassal city of the Church. It is true Bologna was not in open rebellion: she admitted a Papal legate, but allowed him no authority, for the power was exercised by Xanto de' Bentivogli, supported by a council of sixteen.<sup>1</sup> The rulers of Bologna doubted whether to admit the Pope within their walls. On the one hand, if he passed by the city such a mark of displeasure might encourage the Bolognese exiles to renew their attempts at revolution; on the other hand, the presence of the Pope within the walls might encourage a rising of the popular party. At last it was decided to invite the Pope to Bologna, but to summon a large body of cavalry from Milan to keep the city in order during his stay. Pius II. was obliged to accept these conditions; but the Milanese leaders took an oath of fidelity to the Pope, and the whole body was put under the command of Galeazzo Sforza. The entry of Pius II. into Bologna through lines of armed men was different from the peaceful procession which he had hitherto enjoyed. Bologna was sullen and suspicious. The orator who welcomed the Pope gave offence to the rulers by the way in which he spoke of

Pius II. at  
Florence  
and  
Bologna.  
April—  
May, 1459.

<sup>1</sup> 'Legatum admisit qui verius ligatus appellari potuit,' says Pius, *Comm.*, 55.

the condition of the city. He was exiled for his outspokenness, and was restored only on the entreaties of Pius II.<sup>1</sup>

Pius II. was glad to leave the uncongenial city for Ferrara, where Borso of Este received him with open arms. Borso had many demands to make from the Pope; he wished for the title of Duke of Ferrara and the remission of his yearly tribute to the Papacy for the fief which he held. Though Pius II. refused to go so far, yet he gave Borso many proofs of his friendliness, and his stay in Ferrara was one unceasing festivity.

When Pius II. first announced his Congress, he mentioned as the place for its assembling Udine or Mantua. Udine was in the Venetian territory; and the Venetians, who had made a treaty with the Turks for commercial purposes, did not think it wise to lend their cities for a hostile demonstration against their ally. It had been, therefore, settled that the Congress was to meet at Mantua. Thither Pius II. travelled by boat up the Po; he was welcomed by the Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga, and entered the city, on May 27, in solemn procession. First came his attendants and three of the Cardinals; then twelve white horses without riders, with gold reins and saddles. After these were borne, by three mounted nobles, the three banners of the Cross, the Church, and the Piccolomini. Then followed a rich baldachino, behind which walked the clergy of Mantua in their robes. Next were the royal ambassadors, then the officials of the Curia, preceded by a golden cross, and followed by a white horse bearing the Eucharist in a gold box, under a silken canopy, surrounded by lighted candles. Then came Galeazzo Sforza and Ludovico Gonzaga, followed by the Cardinals. After them the Pope, clad in full pontifical attire, and blazing with jewels, was borne in his litter by nobles, and was followed by a crowd of prelates. At the entry of the gate Gonzaga dismounted, and presented to the Pope the keys of the city.

Pius II.  
arrives at  
Mantua.  
May 27,  
1459.

<sup>1</sup> Campanus, *Vita Pii II.*, Mur., iii., pt. 2, p. 976.



Then the procession moved over carpets strewn with flowers to the cathedral. Next day Bianca, the wife of Sforza, with her four sons and her daughter Ippolita, visited the Pope. It is characteristic of the education of the age that the youthful Ippolita addressed the Pope in a Latin speech, which excited general admiration, and received from him an appropriate answer.<sup>1</sup>

So far all things had smiled on Pius II. He had enjoyed to the full the pleasures of pomp and pageantry, and had received all the satisfaction that fair speeches and ready promises could give. He was now anxious to reap the fruits of his journey in the results of the Congress. With laudable punctuality he arrived in Mantua three days before the appointed time, June 1; but he found no one there to meet him. The ambassadors who had been sent to him at Siena were not empowered to represent their masters at the Congress. On June 1 a service was held in the cathedral, after which the Pope addressed the prelates. He lamented the lukewarmness of Christendom, and his own disappointment. He asked them to pray that God would give men greater zeal for His cause. He would stay in Mantua till he had found what were the intentions of the princes: if they came, the Congress would proceed; if not, he would go back home, and bear the lot which Heaven assigned. They were brave words; and those who had heard them thought that they befitted the occasion. But as Pius II. remained in Mantua week after week, the patience of the Cardinals became exhausted, and they longed to return to the pleasures of Rome. Mantua, they murmured, was marshy and unhealthy; did the Pope mean to destroy them by pestilence in that stifling spot, where the wine was poor, the food scarce, and nothing could be heard save the croaking of the frogs? 'You have satisfied your honour,' they pleaded to Pius. 'No one imagines that you alone can conquer the Turks. The princes of Europe pay

Pius II.  
waits at  
Mantua.  
June, 1459.

<sup>1</sup> They are given by Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 192.

no heed to us: let us go home.' Bessarion and Torquemada were the only Cardinals who held by the Pope. Scarampo, who had left his fleet to come to Mantua, withdrew to Venice, where he openly ridiculed the Congress.

But Pius II. hoped too much from the Congress to give it up so readily. Not only was he in earnest about the crusade, but he wished the Congress to give a practical overthrow to the Conciliar movement. At Constance the hierarchy under the presidency of the Emperor had decided the affairs of the Church; Pius II. desired to establish a precedent of the princes of Europe, under the presidency of the Pope, deciding the affairs of Christendom. If even partial success should follow such an attempt it would be the completion of the Papal restoration, the assertion of the Papal supremacy over the nationalities of Europe. Pius II. hoped that the Papacy would show its superiority over the fruitless Diets of Germany, and would establish its authority high above the Empire as the undisputed centre of the state system of Christendom.

The first envoys who came to Mantua were sent by Thomas, the despot of the Morea, a brother of the last Greek Emperor, Constantine Palæologus. Thomas and his brother Demetrius had maintained themselves in the Morea on condition of paying tribute to the Sultan. But they quarrelled with one another; the Turks advanced against them; they were incapable either of fighting or paying tribute. The envoys of Thomas brought as a present to the Pope sixteen Turkish captives, and with the boastfulness of his race, represented himself as victorious; he did not want much help; with a handful of Italians he would clear the Morea of Turks. His request was discussed by the Cardinals, and at the earnest instance of Bessarion, against the better judgment of the Pope, it was resolved to send him three hundred men. They were rapidly equipped, and received the Pope's benediction before they departed for Ancona. Of course their services were of no real use, and they were little better than freebooters.

Arrival of  
envoys of  
the despot  
of Morea.

There was no lack of envoys clamouring for aid, though those who could offer aid were wanting. From Bosnia, Albania, Epirus, Illyria, Cyprus, Rhodes, and Lesbos, came messengers demanding help. At last came three ambassadors from the Emperor—the Bishop of Trieste, Heinrich Senftleben, and Johann Hinderbach, who had been fellow-secretaries with Æneas in the Emperor's Chancery: they were men of no standing to represent the Emperor in a matter concerning the interests of Christendom. Pius II. sent them back with a severe letter of remonstrance; he did not recognise them as ambassadors, and urged the Emperor to come himself, or send men of rank and position. Letter followed upon letter; but the Emperor tarried and the other German princes followed his example. At last, at the end of August, the envoys of the Duke of Burgundy—his nephew, John of Cleves, and Jean de Croy—drew near. The Pope wished that they should be received outside the walls by the Cardinals; but the Cardinals answered that they were the equals of kings, and ought not to pay honour to a duke. Pius II. urged that all appearance of arrogance should be avoided, and finally the Cardinals Orsini and Colonna offered to go as a deputation from the Sacred College. The Burgundians were honourably received, and on the day after their arrival were welcomed by the Pope in a public consistory. The Bishop of Arras made a speech excusing the Duke of Burgundy's absence on the ground of age. Pius II. replied in praise of the Duke's zeal. But when these ceremonies were over, and the Pope wished to turn to business, the Duke of Cleves brought forward a private question of his own. He had taken under his protection the town of Soest, which had rebelled against the Archbishop of Köln. The case had long been before the Papacy, and Pius II. had issued an admonition to Soest to return to its rightful allegiance. The Duke of Cleves demanded that this admonition should be recalled, and refused to treat of the business of the Congress till the Pope had complied with his request. Pius

Arrival  
of the  
Imperial  
and Bur-  
gundian  
envoys.  
August,  
1459.

II. was in a strait: he could not abandon the possessions of the Church; he did not wish to draw down failure on the Congress. He adopted a dubious policy of delay. 'The Roman Pontiffs,' he says, 'have been accustomed, where justice cannot be done without public scandal, to dissemble till a convenient season. Nor do the lawgivers forbid such a course; for the greater evil must always be obviated.'<sup>1</sup> So Pius II. withdrew his admonition to Soest, to satisfy the Duke of Cleves, and promised the representatives of the Archbishop of Köln that he would renew it as soon as affairs allowed.

After this the Pope tried to bring the Burgundian envoys to business; but it soon became evident that the crusading zeal of their master had cooled. Their instructions simply empowered them to hear the Pope's views and report them to the Duke of Burgundy. They added that the Duke considered an expedition against the Turks to be a matter that would tax the energies of united Christendom; in its present discordant state a crusade was hopeless. Pius II. in reply pointed out the peril to Europe if the Turks were to become masters of Hungary. The pacification of Europe was no doubt desirable; but it would take some time to wipe out the hostilities of years. Meanwhile Hungary was in extremities. Though Europe was troubled, yet if every nation contributed equally to the crusade, the balance of power would be left unaltered. No vast expedition was needed; 50,000 or 60,000 men would be as many as could be fed and maintained in the field, and would be enough to keep the Turk in check. Surely that was not much to ask from Europe. So pleaded the Pope. Many conferences and many arguments were needed before the Burgundian envoys at length promised that the Duke would send into Hungary 2000 knights and 4000 foot, and would maintain them so long as the Christian army remained in the field. When this was settled the

Negotiations  
with the  
Burgundians.

<sup>1</sup> *Commentarii*, p. 68.

Duke of Cleves prepared to go. In vain Pius II. strove to keep him at Mantua. He and his colleague departed, leaving a few of the humbler members of the embassy behind. Again Pius II. and his Cardinals were left alone; again the murmurs of the Curia waxed loud against the useless sojourn in Mantua.

In the middle of September came Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, who again was welcomed by the Cardinals. Again was held a public consistory, and Francesco Filelfo, the celebrated scholar, delivered a long and eloquent speech in behalf of Sforza. The change of human affairs had brought about that the young Sienese lad, who had once scraped together money to go to Florence and attend the lectures of the famous Filelfo, now sat on the Papal throne and received the elegant adulation of his former teacher. Pius II. listened and applauded; in his reply he called Filelfo the 'Attic Muse,' and extolled Sforza as a model of Christendom. But Sforza had his own political ends to serve. He wished to agree with the Pope on an Italian policy which for the next thirty years gave Italy peace such as she had not enjoyed for centuries. He proposed to the Pope a league in defence of the throne of Ferrante in Naples. Sforza saw clearly enough that the success of the House of Anjou in Naples would make French interest predominant in Italy, and would bring upon Milan the claims of the House of Orleans. If Naples, Milan, and the Papacy were united, the danger of French intervention might be averted.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Sforza wanted the aid of the Pope to procure for him from the Emperor the investiture of the Duchy of Milan.

Arrival of  
the Duke  
of Milan.  
Septem-  
ber, 1459.

The coming of Sforza had, at least, the effect that it induced most of the Italian powers to send their envoys to Mantua; if the Congress did not become of great importance to Europe, it was, at least, a great conference of the Powers of Italy. It is true that

Arrival of  
Italian  
envoys.

<sup>1</sup> See Simoneta, *Vita Sfortiæ*, Mur., xxi., 690.



Borso of Modena would not forgive the Pope for his refusal to make him Duke of Ferrara; he preferred his own amusements to the dull work of the Congress. But Florence, Siena, Lucca, Bologna, and Genoa sent envoys, as did Ferrante of Naples. An embassy came also from Casimir, King of Poland, and tardily from the Duke of Savoy. Even Venice, which had refused to give offence to the Turks, sent two envoys when the news of Sforza's arrival was received.

At last Pius II. might claim that something which might be called a Congress was assembled at Mantua. There was no time to wait any longer, as Sforza was already anxious to depart. So on September 26, the Congress was opened by a solemn service in the cathedral, after which the Cardinals and envoys assembled before the Pope. Then Pius II. delivered a speech, which was regarded as a masterpiece of oratory. Copies were circulated throughout Europe; and if an appreciation of eloquence had borne any practical fruit the Turk would soon have been driven back into Asia. For three hours the rounded periods of Pius II. rolled on: and, though he was affected by a cough, his excitement freed him during his speech from that troublesome enemy of rhetorical effect.<sup>1</sup> After an invocation of divine assistance Pius II. put forth the causes of war, the losses which Islam had inflicted on Christendom, both in the remote past and in more recent days. Even though the present might be endured, the worst had not yet been reached. The Turks were still pressing on, and if Hungary fell before them there was no further barrier for Europe. 'But alas, Christians prefer to war against one another rather than against the Turks. The beating of a bailiff, even of a slave, is enough to draw kings into war; against the Turks, who blaspheme our God, destroy our churches, and strive to destroy the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comm.*, p. 82: 'Quamvis tussi per eos dies laborasset gravissime divina tamen ope adjutus inter orandum neque tussivit unquam neque vel minimum ostendit impedimentum'.



Christian name, no one dares take up arms.' Then he turned to his second point, the chances of success. The Turks had conquered only degenerate peoples, and were themselves an easy prey to the superior strength of Europeans, as the exploits of Hunyadi and Scanderbeg might show. Moreover, God was on the Christian side, for Islam denied the divinity of Christ. Here Pius II. lowered the level of his rhetoric by turning aside to display his learning; he gave a summary of the arguments by which Christ's divinity was maintained. But he skilfully used this as the ground for an impassioned appeal to his hearers; he besought them to show the sincerity of their faith, the depth of their reverence for their divine Redeemer, by driving from Christendom the Turks who blasphemed His name. Then Pius II. proceeded to his third point, the rewards which the war would bring. First there were kingdoms, booty, glory, all in abundance that usually stirred men to war. Besides this was the sure promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the plenary indulgence of sins which he had granted to all crusaders. How short was life in comparison with eternity! How full were the joys of Paradise, where they would see God, and His angels, and all the company of the blessed, and would understand all things! 'Our soul freed from the chain of the body will, not as Plato says, *recover*, but, as Aristotle and our own doctors teach, *attain* to the knowledge of all things. It is a prospect which once stirred men to martyrdom. But we do not ask you to undergo the martyr's tortures; heaven is promised you at a lesser price. Fight bravely for the law of God, and you will gain "what eye never saw nor ear heard". O fools and slow to believe the promises of Scripture! Would that there were here to-day Godfrey or Baldwin, Eustace, Hugh the Great, Bohemund, Tancred, and the rest who in days gone by won back Jerusalem! They would not have suffered us to speak so long, but rising from their seats, as once they did before our predecessor Urban II., they would have cried with ready voice, "Deus lo vult, Deus lo vult!"

‘You silently await the end of our speech, nor seem to be moved by our exhortations. Perhaps there are among you those who think, “This Pope says much why we should go to war and expose ourselves to the enemy’s swords. Such is the way of priests; they bind on others heavy burdens which themselves will not touch with their finger.” Think not so of us. No one was ever more ready than ourselves. We came here, weak as you see, risking our life, and the States of the Church. Our expenses have greatly increased, our revenues diminished. We do not speak boastfully, we only regret that it is not in our power to do more. Oh, if our youthful strength still remained, you should not go to the field without us. We would go before your standard, bearing the cross; we would hurl Christ’s banner amidst the foe, and would count ourselves happy to die for Jesus’ sake. Even now, if you think fit, we will not hesitate to vow to the war our pining body and our weary soul. We shall deem it noble to be borne in our litter through the camp, the battle, the midst of the foe. Decide as you think best. Our person, our resources, we place at your disposal; whatever weight you lay upon our shoulders we will bear.’<sup>1</sup>

When the Pope had ended, Bessarion spoke on behalf of the Cardinals. Not to be outdone by Pius II., he also addressed the assembly for three hours. If Pius II. showed his learning by a defence of the divinity of Christ, Bessarion made a display of scholarship by citing historical instances of those who had died for their country. He was at first tedious, but when he described the capture of Constantinople he grew eloquent, and when he spoke of the actual condition of the Turkish resources, which he estimated at 70,000 men, he was listened to with more attention.<sup>2</sup> When he had ended, the

Proceed-  
ings of  
the  
Congress.

<sup>1</sup> In Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 9, etc.

<sup>2</sup> M. Vast (*Le Cardinal Bessarion*, Paris, 1878), gives a summary of this speech from a MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, p. 238. In spite of M. Vast’s admiration for his hero, he seems to have been somewhat dull, and was regarded as the standing bore on the Eastern question—excellent but tedious.

envoys present praised the Pope's speech and extolled his zeal. Sforza spoke in Italian, with 'a soldier's eloquence,' says the Pope. Last of all the Hungarian envoys addressed the assembly, and loudly complained of the Emperor's interference in Hungarian affairs, thus adding to their trouble when the Turk was at their gates. The Imperial envoy, the Bishop of Trieste, had not a word to say. Pius II. himself had to defend his former master by saying that this was not the place for general political discussion; he knew that both the Emperor and the King of Hungary were just and upright, and he had sent a legate to heal their quarrels.

The Congress contented itself with decreeing war against the Turks in general terms, and Pius II. saw that this was all that he could expect the Congress to do. <sup>Proposals of Pius II.</sup> Next day he summoned the envoys to a conference in his palace for the discussion of ways and means. He put before them the questions—Were the Turks to be attacked by land, or sea, or both? What soldiers were necessary, and how were they to be obtained? Sforza rose and gave his opinion as a soldier. The Turks should be attacked by land and sea; soldiers should be furnished by Hungary and the neighbouring lands, as being best acquainted with the tactics to be employed in fighting the Turks; Italy and the rest of Christendom should furnish money. The Venetians agreed, and added that thirty galleys and eight barks would suffice to cause a diversion on the shores of Greece and the Hellespont, while 40,000 horsemen and 20,000 foot would be enough for war by land. Gismondo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, seeing an opportunity of booty for himself, advocated that the war should be carried on by Italian forces. Pius II. observed significantly, that Italian generals did not care to fight outside Italy, and in this war there was little to gain except for their souls. Other countries offered troops, but would not offer money; their offer must be accepted or nothing would be got from them. The Turkish troops numbered about 200,000, of whom the only real soldiers,

the Janissaries, were 40,000 : to face them 50,000 European troops would suffice, and thirty galleys would also be required. To raise money he proposed that the clergy should pay a tenth, the laity a thirtieth of their revenues for three years, and the Jews a twentieth of all their possessions. The assembly approved the decree in general ; but when the Pope proposed that all should sign it, there was much hesitation. Florence and Venice especially hung back. The Venetians at length declared that they would sign it if double the number of ships were provided, and they were paid for supplying them, and received all the conquests made by the crusaders. Matters began to wear a doubtful aspect when Pius II. attempted to turn general promises into definite undertakings. Sforza had done his duty by joining the Congress, and left Mantua for Milan.

Pius II. professed himself satisfied with the results which he obtained, and strove in public to maintain a semblance of contentment. His real feelings, however, are expressed in a letter to Carvajal, written on November 5. ‘We do not find, to confess the truth, such zeal in the minds of Christians as we hoped. We find few who have a greater care for public matters than for their own interests. Yet we have shown how false is that calumny so long cast against the Holy See ; we have proved that no one is to be accused except themselves. We seem, however, to have disposed affairs in Italy for God’s service, since the princes and potentates have entered into obligations confirmed by their own signatures. But we hear that Genoa is sending a fleet to urge the French claims in Naples, and we fear that we shall lose not only help from those engaged in war, but that all the rest will be drawn into the struggle. Unless God help us, the first fruits of our labour will be lost in the calamities of Christian people.’<sup>1</sup>

In truth everything depended for Pius II. on the attitude

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, 1459, No. 78.

assumed by France, whose ambassadors were announced as on their way to Mantua. They had halted at Lyons on receiving the news of the reception given to the Burgundians, and doubted whether it became the national dignity that they should advance farther. One of their number, the Bishop of Chartres, went on beforehand. He had a private end to serve; for having been appointed Bishop according to the Pragmatic Sanction, he had not been confirmed by the Pope. Pius II. readily gave him his confirmation, and the Bishop returned to his colleagues, but never went back to Mantua. The French embassy was joined by the envoys of René of Anjou, and of the Duke of Brittany. At last on November 16 they entered Mantua. France was represented by the Archbishop of Tours and the Bishop of Paris; René by the Bishop of Marseilles; and the Duke of Brittany by the Bishop of S. Malo. Genoa also sent an embassy, and soon after arrived from the Emperor envoys more worthy to represent him—Charles of Baden and the Bishops of Eichstädt and Trent.

Arrival of  
French  
envoys.  
November  
16, 1459.

It was the general expectation that the French envoys would at the outset challenge the Pope's proceedings in regard to the Neapolitan kingdom, and would refuse obedience or threaten a General Council. Some anxiety was felt when they were admitted before the consistory on November 21. The Bishop of Paris spoke for two hours in praise of the French King and his anxiety about the Neapolitan question. He said little about the Turks, less about any aid in a crusade. Finally, he offered to the Pope the obedience of the French Church as that of a son to a father; he said this pointedly to exclude any notion of dependence as on a master.<sup>1</sup> The obedience of René and of Genoa was afterwards tendered by their envoys. Pius II. in his answer dwelt on the dignity of the Apostolic See, established by God, and not by coun-

Reception  
of the  
French  
envoys.

<sup>1</sup> Pii II. Comm., p. 88: 'Filialem obedientiam appellavit, ut servilem excluderet'.



cils or decrees, above all kingdoms and peoples. Twice he repeated this, with increased emphasis, and then passed on to say that he wished to receive with all favour 'his dear son in Christ, René, the illustrious King of Sicily,' but would answer more privately his demands.<sup>1</sup> Both sides were satisfied with the result of their first interview. The Pope was content that, after all their threats, the French had at least submitted formally to his obedience. The French flattered themselves that the Pope had recognised the power of the French King, and was willing to obey his will.

But these proceedings were merely formal; the real struggle began when the French envoys came to lay before the Pope their complaints about his Neapolitan policy. They were resolved to show no diplomatic reserve, and brought with them to the audience all the envoys who were present at Mantua. The Bailly of Rouen spoke in praise of France, 'the nation of the Lilies,' as he persisted in calling it. He dwelt on the services rendered by France to the Papacy and on its connexion with Naples; he complained that Alfonso had seized Naples by force, not by right; that Pius had acted wrongly in recognising Ferrante, his bastard son, which even Calixtus III., though an Aragonese, had not ventured to do. He demanded that Pius should recall all that he had done for Ferrante, should invest King René, and help his forces to gain the kingdom; should recognise the French party in Genoa, and revoke all ecclesiastical censures against the city. The friends of France listened to the trenchant orator, and raised their crests in triumph: they thought the Pope would not venture to reply. Pius answered, that what he had done regarding Naples had been done with the advice of the Cardinals, whom he must consult before saying more. So saying he dismissed the assembly.

Next day Pius II. was attacked by a cramp in the stomach,

<sup>1</sup> His clever speech is given in Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 31, etc.



and a violent cough which confined him for some days to his bed. The French declared that this was a pretence to cover his confusion and escape from answering their attack. Perhaps the Pope made the most of his illness to gain time to prepare his answer, and render its delivery more effective. 'Though I should die in the middle of my speech, I will answer them,' he said, and summoned all the ambassadors to a public audience. He dragged himself from his sick bed, and, with pale face and trembling limbs, seated himself on his throne. At first he could scarcely speak for weakness and excitement; soon gathering strength, he spoke for three hours, and his effort had such a beneficial effect that it entirely freed him from his cramp. In his speech the Pope complained of the charges brought against him by the French. He spoke of the glories of their nation in language which outdid even their own orator. He set forth their services to the Holy See and the benefits which they had in turn received. Then he traced the history of the Neapolitan succession under his immediate predecessors. 'We did not exclude the French, we found them excluded,' he said; 'we found Ferrante in possession of the kingdom, and recognised the actual state of things. If the French had been nearer we would have preferred them. We could not disturb the peace of Italy for those who were at a distance. In recognising Ferrante we reserved the rights of the House of Anjou. The case is still open for our decision.' He urged the need of peace in Christendom and war against the Turks. Finally, as the French had spoken of the gratitude due to France from the Holy See, the Pope turned to the Pragmatic Sanction by which the power of the Pope in France had been reduced to such limits as pleased the Parlement of Paris. He admitted the good intentions of the French King, but warned him that by his present course he was imperilling the souls of his people.<sup>1</sup> The French ambas-

Answer of  
Pius II.  
to the  
French.

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 40, etc.

sadors expressed their wish to answer some things that the Pope had said, as being contrary to the honour of their King. Pius II. replied that he was willing to hear them when, and as often as, they chose, and so retired. The Curia thronged round him with joy. 'Never,' said they, 'within the memory of our fathers have words been spoken so worthy of a Pope as those about the Pragmatic Sanction.' Pius II. had won an oratorical triumph, and had given another proof that it was impossible to get the better of him in discussion. Next day the French appeared before him in private, in the presence only of eight Cardinals. The time for public displays, they felt, was past. There was some more discussion about the Pragmatic Sanction, and the envoys in their private capacity made their peace with the Pope. But this political wrangle had driven into the background the question of the crusade. When Pius II. asked them what help he might expect from France, he was answered that France could do nothing till she was at peace with England. The Pope proposed that France and England should contribute an equal number of soldiers, so as to leave the balance unaltered: if they could not send troops, they might give money. The French said that they had no powers for any such undertaking, but assented to the Pope's proposal for a conference to arrange peace with England.

England was too much involved in internal conflicts to pay much heed to the request of Pius that it should send envoys to Mantua. Henry VI. had nominated an embassy, at the head of which was the Earl of Worcester, but it never set out for Mantua. Two priests arrived on the King's behalf, proffering the Pope the obedience of England and bringing his excuses. Their credentials bore the usual endorsement, 'Teste Rege'; and we are surprised to find Pius II. so ignorant of the forms used in England that he thought that the King, bereft of all officials, had been compelled to act as his own witness in

England  
and the  
Congress.

default of others.<sup>1</sup> To England, however, was sent as Papal legate, to make peace, the Bishop of Terni, who fell into the hands of the Earl of Warwick, identified himself with the cause of the House of York, excommunicated the Lancastrians, and gathered for himself large sums of money from the English Church. When the Pope heard of this he recalled his legate, degraded him from his priestly office, and confined him in a monastery for the rest of his life.<sup>2</sup> However, no efforts of a Papal legate could have given peace to England or obtained from her aid for a crusade. France was offended by the Pope's dealings with Naples, and was more anxious to assert the claims of René than to attack the Turks. England and France alike were useless for any help to the Pope in his great endeavour.

It only remained for Pius II. to see what promises he could get from Germany. There were in Mantua the ambassadors of the Emperor and of many German princes; chief amongst them was the old opponent of Æneas Sylvius, Gregory Heimburg, who represented Albert of Austria. Pius II. called them together, and wished to obtain a common understanding. The Imperial envoys were ready to accept his proposals; but those of the princes, led by Heimburg, refused. Heimburg was convinced that the Pope's proposal of levying a tenth and granting indulgences was merely a scheme for enriching himself and his Imperial ally. He would agree to no general proposal; and Pius II. had to deal with each embassy separately. By means of private negotiations the Pope at length contrived to obtain a renewal of the promise made at the Diets of Frankfort and Neustadt to equip 10,000 horse and 32,000 foot. To arrange for general peace, and settle all preliminaries, a Diet was to be held at Nürn-

Negotiations with the Germans.

<sup>1</sup> 'In litteris mandati non fuerunt de more, aut testes nominati, aut subscripti tabelliones; sed adnotata erat regis manu hujuscemodi subscriptio, Henricus teste me ipso: et sigillum regni appensum. Contempsit Pontifex derisitique tanti regis tam vilem legationem.'—*Pii II. Comm.*, 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Pii II. Comm.*, 277; *Cardinalis Papiensis Epistolæ*, 162.

berg, and another in the Emperor's dominions, to make peace between him and Matthias of Hungary: the Pope was to send a legate to both. Pius II. was compelled to accept the sterile procedure of a Diet, the futility of which he knew so well, and which Calixtus III. had endeavoured to escape without success. He appointed as his legate Bessarion, probably because he was the only Cardinal whose zeal would induce him to undertake the thankless office. Moreover, Pius II. attempted to give the agreement greater definiteness by appointing Frederick general of the crusading army, and empowering him, if he could not lead it himself, to nominate a prince in his stead.

While these negotiations were in progress Sigismund of Austria arrived in Mantua, on November 10, with a brilliant train of 400 knights. He was honourably received, and Heimbürg, in a public audience, spoke in Sigismund's behalf. He recounted the glories of the House of Austria and the virtues of Sigismund: he dwelt on the acquaintance that had existed in earlier days between Sigismund when a boy and Æneas Sylvius, the Imperial secretary. Æneas had indeed written for Sigismund love-letters, which were not edifying: and Heimbürg, embittered by resentment against the Pope, mockingly recalled the past, which Pius II. would fain have forgotten. The culture of Sigismund, he said, had been greatly formed by the delightful love-letters which his Holiness had transplanted from Italy to Germany.<sup>1</sup> Pius II. had to sit with

Arrival of  
Sigismund  
of Austria.

<sup>1</sup> Pius, in his *Commentaries*, p. 90, gives his account of the matter: 'Inter cætera dixerat Gregorius Sigismundum Pii, cum in minoribus ageret, fuisse discipulum, qui suas epistolas avide legisset, quarum volumen apud se haberet, et aliquæ illarum Sigismondo essent scriptæ; quod verum inveniet, si quis epistolas sæculares legerit quas Pius nondum sacris initiatus scripsit'. The remark is apologetic, and the letter addressed to Sigismund about his mistress (No. 122, ed. 1551) is not one which a Pope would care to be reminded of. Voigt (*Æneas Sylvius*, iii., 100) quotes from a Munich MS. of Heimbürg's speech: 'Quæ (noticia) simul cum ætate crevit adaucta feliciter fomentum subministrantibus litteris illis *oratoriis* quas ipsa S.V. persona ab Ytalis traduxit in Germanos. . . . Dixi, pater beatissime, firmamentum contracte noticie (et) amoris accensi præstitisse litteras illas *oratorias*,' etc. He suggests that *oratorias* makes no sense, and is probably a mistake for *amatorias*; there seems much probability in this correction.

a conviction that he was being laughed at, unable with any dignity to reply.

In truth neither Sigismund nor his orator Heimbург was friendly disposed towards the Papacy. Sigismund had on his hands an ecclesiastical quarrel which was destined to give Pius II. a great deal of trouble, and which dated ten years back. In 1450 Nicolas V. conferred on Nicolas of Cusa, whom he had just made Cardinal, the Bishopric of Brixen. Cusa was a poor man and needed the means of supporting his new dignity; but the provision of Nicolas V., made without waiting for a capitular election, was in direct contravention to the Concordat, and was also an infringement of the agreement made with Frederick III., as Brixen was one of the bishoprics to which the Emperor was allowed to appoint during his lifetime. The Chapter of Brixen made their election, and turned to Sigismund, as Count of the Tyrol, to help them to maintain their rights; but the Pope and the Emperor were too strong for them. Sigismund did not judge it expedient to prolong the contest, and Cusa was unwillingly admitted as Bishop of Brixen in 1451. Cusa was for a time employed as Papal legate, in selling to the Germans the benefits of the year of Jubilee without giving them the trouble of going to Rome, and in stirring up the crusading spirit. He was not in earnest with either of these tasks, and returned as soon as he could to his own diocese, which he proposed to make a model to the rest of Germany.

Quarrel of  
Sigis-  
mund of  
Austria  
and Car-  
dinal  
Cusa.  
1451-1457.

Cusa was a man of learning—not the learning of the Renaissance, but the technical theology of the schoolroom. Of humble extraction, he had nothing save his talents on which to rely. He had been a follower of Cesarini at Basel, had abandoned with the other moderates the Council's cause, and had made his reputation by his learned writings in favour of the Papacy. He was an able but narrow-minded man, whose bent was to abstractions and technicalities rather than to zeal or states-

Cusa as  
Bishop of  
Brixen.



manship. He did not abandon the reforming ideas he had held at Basel, but transferred them from one field to another. He had striven to reform the Church in its head; he was equally bent on reforming it in some of its members. A movement such as that expressed at Basel could not entirely die out; but it was easily diverted to trivialities. If the entire Church system could not be reformed, there was at least one part of it to which a mechanical rule might be applied. If the ecclesiastical organisation was not to be revised, it might at least be more tightly strung and reduced to greater uniformity. There was a decided feeling that the monastic orders ought to be brought back to a straiter observance of their original rule. It was a cry which afforded some satisfaction to the technical mind of a man like Cusa, who could point to success in this sphere as the proper beginning of a conservative reformation within the Church itself.

Cusa's  
reforma-  
tion of  
monas-  
teries.

So Cusa began a strict visitation of the monasteries within his diocese. If his visitation had only aimed at restoring neglected observances and ceremonies in the cloisters, it would at least have been harmless. But a rigid visitation of monasteries, in the face of a strong opposition, raised many legal questions concerning the Bishop's visitatorial power. It was hard to define the limits of the spiritualities and the temporalities of the monasteries. It was difficult to determine what were the powers of the Bishop as visitor, and what were the rights of the Count of the Tyrol as protector of the temporalities of foundations within his dominions. The Benedictine nuns of Sonnenburg in the Pusterthal resisted the Bishop and appealed to Sigismund as protector of their monastery. Sigismund was loth to quarrel with Cusa, who laid the nuns under an interdict. He mediated with the Cardinal; but the Sonnenburg difficulty embittered the feelings of both parties and broadened into other and more important issues. Cusa turned the formal acuteness of his mind to determine the exact rights of the Bishopric of



Brixen. He established to his own satisfaction that the protectorship over monastic foundations, exercised by the Counts of the Tyrol, was granted to them by the Bishop of Brixen, together with lands, for which they were vassals to the see. The Bishop of Brixen was a prince of the Empire, and the Emperor was in things temporal the protector of the see; the rights of the Counts of the Tyrol depended only on a grant from their Bishop. Sigismund naturally asserted that the Bishopric of Brixen was under the Counts of the Tyrol, to whom belonged the protectorate with all its rights, however much the formal investiture had been conferred on the Counts by the Bishops. The angry feelings on both sides waxed high; but Cusa had only the weapons of interdict and excommunication. As he was extremely unpopular through his harshness, the national sentiment was all on the side of Sigismund, and the excommunications were little heeded.

Attempts were made to bring about a peace, and Sigismund invited Cusa to an interview at Wilten in 1457. Whether Cusa lost his nerve, or whether he deliberately chose to set up a plea for further proceedings, cannot be determined. But he fled from Wilten, declaring that his life was in danger, though the evidence which he could afterwards produce for his terror was very slight. Still Cusa had the ear of the Curia, and Calixtus III. laid Sigismund under an interdict till he had satisfied Cusa of his freedom and personal security. Sigismund, prompted by Gregory Heimburg, appealed to a better-informed Pope, but offered full security to Cusa, and declared himself ready to withdraw his appeal if friendly overtures were made. Cusa was inflexible, proceeded with the interdict, and showed his willingness to use forcible means. He forbade the peasants who held under the Sonnenburg nuns to pay their dues to the rebellious abbess. The convent employed a band of forty men to collect them; whereupon a captain in Cusa's pay fell upon this luckless band and cut it to pieces.

Open  
breach  
between  
Cusa and  
Sigis-  
mund.  
1457.

Thus matters stood when Calixtus III. died, and both the combatants turned with expectation to his successor. Cusa had been an old friend of Æneas, and hastened to Rome to lay his case before him. Sigismund had been a pupil of Æneas when he was at Frederick's Court. Pius II. was in all things desirous of peace, and would fain have mediated in the quarrel. On setting out for Mantua he left Cardinal Cusa as his representative in Rome; but Cusa was afterwards summoned to Mantua, that the Pope might try to settle matters between him and Sigismund. It was for this purpose that Sigismund had come. Pius II. offered his services as a mediator; he did not decide as a judge. In the presence of the Cardinals and of the Imperial ambassadors, he listened to the complaints of both parties. He had no desire to favour one rather than the other, and at last patched up a temporary reconciliation, on the understanding that the legal question of the relations between the Bishop and the Count was to be decided by a process within two years, and the other points in dispute were to be arranged between the two parties at a Diet to be held in Trent. Thus nothing was definitely decided, and Sigismund departed from Mantua in indignation on November 29.<sup>1</sup> Pius II. had no feeling against Sigismund as to the points in dispute; but he had seen enough to know that, under Heimburg's advice, Sigismund was ready to prosecute his cause in a manner most offensive to the Papacy. The appeal to a future Council was a relic of the state of things which Pius II. hoped to obliterate for ever; it was a revolutionary memory which must never be again awakened in Germany. Pius II. was ready to wait for a while and see if Sigismund would pursue a more respectful course; if not, he must at least cut the ground from under his feet before he pressed him further.

<sup>1</sup> The details of [this long struggle are to be found in Jäger, *Der Streit des Cardinals Nicolas von Cusa mit dem Herzoge Sigmund von Oesterreich als Grafen von Tirol*. Innsbruck, 1861. Jäger has also published

If one object of Pius II. was to wage war against the Turk, the other was to wipe out of the ecclesiastical system all traces of the conciliar movement. The two objects were, moreover, closely connected. The Neapolitan question threatened to bring the Papacy into collision with France, and France might use its old engine of a Council. If Germany were to be useful for the crusade, if the Papal decrees for taming Germany were to be effective, the Diets must be prevented from throwing hindrances in the way by raising untoward questions of the rights of the German Church, clamouring for further reform and appealing to future Councils. The example of Sigismund, the machinations of Heimbürg, must be checked from doing further mischief; the power of the restored Papacy must be fully asserted in the person of one who had devoted the best energies of his life to the cause of that restoration. It was pardonable that Pius II. should wish to put the crown to his life's work. If the Congress of Mantua had not been successful in raising the prestige of the Papacy, and showing Europe the unwonted sight of a Pope directing the activity of Christendom, it might at least be made memorable as the occasion of a firm assertion of the Papal authority. Pius II., after Sigismund's departure, unfolded his scheme to the Cardinals and prelates assembled in Mantua, who all gave their cordial assent. A Papal Constitution was accordingly drawn up and published on January 18, 1460, known, from its first words, as 'Execrabilis et priscis inauditus temporibus'. In it the Pope condemns, as an 'execrable abuse, unheard of in former times,' any appeal to a future Council. It is ridiculous to appeal to what does not exist and whose future existence is indeterminate. Such a custom is only a means of escaping just judgment, a cloak for iniquity, and a destruction of all discipline. All such appeals are declared invalid; any one who makes them is declared *ipso facto*

The Bull  
'Execrabilis'.  
January  
18, 1460.

excommunicated, together with all who frame or witness any document containing them.<sup>1</sup> The Bull was a master-stroke on the part of one who well knew the dangers against which he had to contend. If Bulls could have established the Papal authority, Pius II. would have known how to frame them. His precaution was wise; but it failed of effect. Both René of Anjou and Sigismund of the Tyrol lodged appeals in spite of the Papal denunciation. Yet the Bull of Pius II., though not immediately successful, worked its way into the ecclesiastical system and became one of the pillars on which the Papal authority rested.

Only one other prince visited Mantua, Albert of Brandenburg, whom Pius II. greeted warmly as 'the German Achilles'. He made the usual protestations of zeal against the Turks, and received from the Pope, on the Festival of the Epiphany, a consecrated sword. But Albert had his own ends to serve; it suited his position in Germany to be on good terms with the Emperor and Pope. When Albert had gone there was nothing more to do at Mantua. On January 14 Pius II. declared war against the Turks, and promised indulgences to all who took part in it. He issued, also, decrees imposing a subsidy of a tenth on the clergy and a thirtieth on the laity, especially in Italy. Then on January 19, after a speech in which he magnified the offers of help which had been made, Pius II. enumerated his expectations. It was not all that he had hoped for, yet it was a fair show.<sup>2</sup> The ambassadors present solemnly renewed their promises. Then Pius II. knelt before the altar and chanted some appropriate psalms. The Congress was over, and next day the Pope left Mantua after a sojourn of eight months.

The Congress of Mantua could not be called a success, yet Pius II. could urge, with some show of truth, that it

Dissolu-  
tion of the  
Congress,  
January  
19, 1460.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comm.*, p. 90. Raynaldus, 1460, 10.

<sup>2</sup> 'Fatemur non omnia facta sunt quæ putavimus, sed neque omnia prætermisssa: neque maxima neque minima sunt quæ Christiani principes promiserunt,' was the judgment of Pius II. *Orationes*, Mansi, ii., 79.

could not be called an entire failure. It was true that the Papacy had not gathered round itself the enthusiasm of Christendom, and had not drawn the powers of Europe from their national jealousies to common action for the common weal. But at least the Congress had shown the sincerity of the Pope's intentions, and had freed him from blame. Pius II. had not disguised from himself the difficulties which beset the politics of Europe; he had hoped that a little enthusiasm might sweep some of them away. He had forgotten that the restored Papacy was scarcely in a position to appeal to the enthusiasm of Europe. He had forgotten his own antecedents, but others had not. He had been too closely connected with the questionable intrigues which brought about the Papal restoration to stand high in the estimation of Europe. The shifty diplomat was not likely to be trusted however cleverly he talked about common interests. The appeal of Pius II. awoke no general response.

Results of  
the Con-  
gress of  
Mantua.

Yet the Congress of Mantua had its results. If it had not succeeded in raising Europe above its particular interests, it at least brought those interests clearly to light. Pius II. was able to gauge the attitude of France towards Naples; he saw that Germany centred round the new power of Bohemia, and was able to consider how far he could cope with the Bohemian king; he saw in Sigismund of the Tyrol the strength of the remnants of the German neutrality. Above all things, the Congress of Mantua established the system of Italian politics, and gave the Pope a commanding influence. Pius II. saw that his interests lay in opposite directions. As an Italian power he could not satisfy France; as head of the Church he could not satisfy Bohemia or pacify Sigismund. With the greatest desire for peace at home and war against the Turk, he saw the probability of the failure of his crusade before the threats of war at home. To pacify Europe he was asked to sacrifice Italy and the Church. It would need all his cleverness to avoid this dilemma. In preparation for the difficulties which he foresaw, he strengthened the Papal armoury by the Bull 'Execrabilis'.

## CHAPTER VII.

PIUS II. AND THE AFFAIRS OF NAPLES AND GERMANY.

1460—1461.

BEFORE Pius II. left Mantua war had broken out in Naples, and events soon made it necessary for the Pope to decide what part he was prepared to play. Alfonso had won the kingdom of Naples by his own sword, and ruled it with magnificence. His strong hand and statesmanlike wisdom had kept in subjection the barons, who had grown in power and turbulence during the long period of conflict to which the kingdom had become habituated. They had accepted Ferrante at first, but soon raised their heads in conspiracy against him; for civil war increased their power and suited their interests. They had been so long accustomed to play off one claimant against another that they hastened to seize the opportunity which was now offered to their spirit of lawlessness. The withdrawal of Piccinino from the States of the Church had alienated from Ferrante's side that powerful condottiere general. Headed by the Prince of Taranto, the Neapolitan barons plotted against Ferrante, and invited René to prosecute his claims on Naples.

Jean of Anjou in Naples. October, 1459. René himself had had enough of Neapolitan warfare, and preferred to lead an artist's life in Provence. But his son Jean assumed the title of Duke of Calabria, and received promises of help from the King of France, and from Genoa, which was then under French influence. Moreover, Jean took possession of twenty-



four galleys, which had been built out of the proceeds of the Turkish tithe levied on France by Calixtus III., and which then lay at Marseilles. On October 4, 1459, Jean set sail from Genoa, and appeared before Naples. He landed at Castellamare, and the barons of Naples one by one flocked to his standard. Ferrante was confounded at this almost universal treachery, and scarcely knew where to turn. Only the coming of the winter saved him from disaster; he shut himself up in Naples, and summoned Pius II. and Sforza to his aid. The first object of their endeavour was to prevent the Angevin party from receiving the aid of Jacopo Piccinino, who on withdrawing sulkily from the States of the Church had sought to enrich himself at the expense of Gismondo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini. Gismondo was a strange mixture of an unscrupulous condottiere and a munificent patron of art and letters. He adorned Rimini, held a splendid court, and cast longing eyes on the dominions of his neighbour Federigo da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino. Federigo and Piccinino made common cause against him, and at Mantua he had called on the Pope to mediate. Pius II. was in too great need of soldiers to refuse his favour even to one who, like Gismondo, openly avowed his contempt for all religion and lived in defiance of all law. Pius mediated between Gismondo and his enemies, but sold his mediation at a good price. He took into his hands, as security for a payment of 60,000 ducats due from Gismondo to the King of Naples, Sinigaglia and Fano, which he afterwards conferred on his favourite nephew. Piccinino, by this mediation of the Pope, saw himself a second time robbed of his prey and was more indignant than before against Pius II. and Ferrante. The first object of Pius II. and Sforza was to prevent Piccinino from making his way from Cesena, where he was posted, to Naples. They trusted to Federigo of Urbino; while Piccinino was aided by Malatesta, and secretly by Borso of Este.

When Pius II. left Mantua he retraced his steps to Ferrara, where Borso perfidiously offered to treat with Piccinino

in his behalf; but Pius II. was not deluded by this offer.

Pius II. and Cosimo de' Medici. He pursued his way to Florence, where he conferred with Cosimo de' Medici about the condition of Italy, and urged on him the prudence of supporting Ferrante for the purpose of excluding the French from Italy. Florence had always been on the Angevin side in Naples, and Cosimo was not convinced. Nor did Pius II. succeed in inducing the wary Florentines to accept his decree of a tax for the crusade; he might perhaps be permitted to tax the clergy, but the laity demurred. On January 31 Pius II. entered Siena, where he took up his abode for some time. The archbishopric of the city had just become vacant, and Pius II. conferred it on his nephew Francesco de' Todeschini, a youth of the age of twenty-three.

Creation of Cardinals. March, 1460. When the period in the Lenten season arrived at which creations of Cardinals were usually made, Pius II. announced his intention of exercising his power. On March 5 he summoned the Cardinals to a consistory; they agreed to the creation of five new Cardinals, on condition that only one should be a nephew. 'You will not,' said Pius II., 'refuse a sixth whom I will name as above all controversy.' The Cardinals pressed that he should be named before they consented. Pius refused, and ultimately had his own way. He named Alessandro Oliva, General of the Augustinian Order, a man renowned for piety and theological learning. The others were the Bishops of Reati and Spoleto, men whom Pius II. needed for the government of the States of the Church; the nephew Francesco, Archbishop of Siena; Niccolo di Fortiguerra, a relation of Pius II.'s mother, and Burchard, Provost of Salzburg, whose nomination was not announced till other Transalpine Cardinals were created. Pius II. was of opinion that he had deserved well of Italy for creating five Italian

<sup>1</sup> 'Ea lege adjecta ut nepos unus esset,' says Pius II., *Comm.*, 98. He seems to wish to represent that the Cardinals desired one nephew, as he says (99), 'negavit se promoturum fuisse [nepotem] nisi cardinales multis precibus id exegissent'.

Cardinals. He was also proud of the fact of having created two of his own relatives in the same consistory. It must be admitted that his two relatives both proved themselves worthy men. Fortiguerra was the chief adviser of the Pope in military matters and the nephew Francesco was himself raised to a brief tenure of the Papacy in 1503.

The ecclesiastical festivities consequent on this creation were disturbed by the news that Piccinino had succeeded in eluding Federigo of Urbino and the Papal Legate, who were watching him, and by forced marches had made his way along the coast into the Abruzzi. Men said that both Federigo and the Pope had connived at his escape, being glad to see their own territories free from the risk of a protracted war.<sup>1</sup> The arrival of Piccinino was a new terror to Ferrante; but Pius II. sent him reinforcements under his condottiere general Simonetto.

While awaiting news from Naples Pius II. lingered in Siena, which he loved so well, under pretext of his health. It would seem that, after his long life of wandering and exile, Pius returned with deep satisfaction to the scenes of his youth, where only he could be genuinely happy and content with the simple enjoyments of country life, which are always dear to a man of real culture. Pius feasted his eyes on the lovely landscape which from the hills of Siena lay open to his view in all the freshness of fine spring weather. He made his health a reason for indulging his taste for country life by expeditions to Macereto and Petrioli in the neighbourhood. The language of Pius II. is interesting as showing his manysidedness, his keen susceptibility to the pleasures of the eye. 'The pleasant springtime had begun; and round Siena all the valleys smiled in their dress of leafage and of flowers, and the crops were rising luxuriant in the fields. The view from Siena was inexpressibly charming; hills of a merciful height, planted with fruit trees and vines, or ploughed for corn,

Troubles  
in Naples.

Country  
life of the  
Pope.

<sup>1</sup> Simoneta, in Mur., xxi., 709: 'Quod sibi quisque timeret ne bellum in sua finitimorumque ditione renovatum diutius quam vellent duceretur'.

overhang pleasant valleys, green with crops and grass, or watered with a constant stream. There are, moreover, many woods, resonant with the sweet song of birds, and every height is crowned by magnificent country houses of the citizens. On one side are splendid monasteries peopled with holy men, on the other the castellated houses of the burghers. The Pope passed with joy through this country, and found the baths equally delightful, lying in a valley about ten miles from the city. The land is watered by the river Mersa, which is full of eels, sweet in flavour though small. The valley at its entrance is cultivated, and full of castles and villas, but grows wilder as it approaches the baths, where it is shut in by a stone bridge of massive workmanship, and by cliffs covered thick with trees. The hills which circle the valley on the right are clad with ever-green ilex, on the left by oak and ash trees. Round the baths are small lodging-houses. Here the Pope stayed a month, and though he bathed twice a day, never neglected public business. Two hours before sunset he would go out into the meadows by the riverside, and in the greenest spot received embassies and petitions. The countrywomen came daily, bringing flowers, and strewing them in the way by which the Pope went to the bath, content with the reward of kissing his foot.<sup>1</sup>

While leading this simple life at Petrioli the Pope was scandalised by hearing of the dissolute life of Cardinal Borgia, who already showed the qualities which were to render him infamous as Alexander VI. A story reached the Pope that an entertainment given by Borgia was the talk of Siena. The Cardinal had invited some Siennese ladies to a garden, from which their fathers, husbands, and brothers were carefully excluded; for five hours the Cardinal and his attendants had engaged in dances of questionable decorum.<sup>2</sup> Pius II. wrote him a letter of

Dissolute  
life of  
Cardinal  
Borgia.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comment.*, 101.

<sup>2</sup> 'Saltatum est, ut accepimus, cum omni licentia; nullis illecebris amatoriiis parsum.'—Raynaldus, 1460, No. 31.

severe yet friendly remonstrance. 'If we were to say only that this conduct displeases us, we should be wrong. It displeases us more than we can say; for the clerical order and our ministry is brought into disrepute, and we seem to have been enriched and magnified, not for righteousness of life, but for an occasion to licentiousness. Hence the contempt of kings, hence the daily scoffs of the laity, hence blame on our own life when we wish to blame others. The Vicar of Christ, who is believed to permit such things, falls into the same contempt. Remember your various offices and dignities. We leave it for yourself to judge if it befits your station to toy with girls, to pelt them with fruits, to hand to her you favour the cup which you have sipped, to look with delight on every kind of pleasure, and to shut out husbands that you may do this with greater freedom. Think of the scandal you bring on us and on your uncle, Calixtus III. If you excuse yourself on the ground of youth, you are old enough (Borgia was twenty-nine) to understand the responsibility of your position. A Cardinal ought to be irreproachable, an example of conduct, good not only for the souls but for the eyes of all men. We are indignant if princes do not obey us; but we bring their blows upon ourselves by making vile the authority of the Church. Let your prudence, therefore, check this vain conduct; if it occurs again we shall be driven to show that it is against our will, and our rebuke must needs put you to open shame. We have always loved you, and regarded you as a model of gravity and decorum: it is for you to re-establish our good opinion. Your age, which gives hopes of reformation, is the cause why we admonish you as a father.'

On his return to Siena in June Pius II. soon had graver matter of disquietude than the delinquencies of Cardinal Borgia. News reached him that on July 7 Ferrante of Naples had been repulsed in an attempt to storm the city of Sarno, into which Jean of Anjou and the Prince of Taranto had retired; the Pope's general, Simonetto, had been killed, and many horses and

Angevin  
victory at  
Sarno.  
July, 1460.



men had fallen into the enemies' hands. Stirred to activity by the news, Piccinino, in the Abruzzi, attacked and defeated, after a stubborn battle, Alessandro Sforza and Federigo of Urbino. These battles, according to the custom of Italian warfare, were neither bloody nor decisive. The Prince of Taranto would not let Jean of Anjou pursue his victory by an attack on Naples, but led him into Campania, where he spent the summer in sieges of insignificant places. Still, the loss of these battles required additional men and money from Sforza and the Pope, and for a moment Pius II. began to waver. The French party in the Curia did not hesitate to show its joy at the Angevin successes; it even went so far as to light bonfires in Siena and insult members of the Pope's household. But Sforza was well versed in Italian warfare, and knew that the ultimate success lay with him who held out longest. He was more than ever convinced that his own security lay in keeping the French out of Italy, and he managed to inspire the Pope with greater confidence.<sup>1</sup> So Pius II. put on a bold front to the Angevin envoys, who requested him to recognise René, or, at least, declare himself neutral. He took his stand on the peace of Lodi, declared that he was only recognising the existing state of affairs, expressed his willingness to decide the question of right if René submitted it to his legal cognisance, and complained of René for disturbing by violence the peace which was so necessary for a crusade. Finally, he warned René against persisting in an appeal to a future Council, lest he incurred the penalties of the decree recently issued at Mantua.<sup>2</sup> Pius II., however, used Ferrante's distress as a means of obtaining grants for his own family. The town of Castiglione della Pescaia and the island of Giglio were given to Andrea, the Pope's

<sup>1</sup> Pius in his *Comm.*, 106, represents himself as heroic and patriotic in this extremity; but Simoneta (*Mur.*, xxi., 713) calls him 'exterritum auxiliique incertum,' and Pius wrote to Federigo of Urbino bidding him not risk another battle, 'quod status noster facile pati posset'. Raynaldus, 1460, No. 63.

<sup>2</sup> In Mansi, *Orationes*, ii., 158. Mansi wrongly dates it 1462.



nephew—not, as the Pope explains, for his own good, but for the good of the country, whose coast could now be made secure.<sup>1</sup>

The pleasant sojourn of Pius II. at Siena was brought to an end by bad news from Rome, where the Pope's absence was the signal for disorder. Cardinal Cusa, who had been left in charge of the city, soon left Rome for Mantua, and thence went to Brixen. The Sienese senator, whom Pius had put in office, was not strong enough to rule the turbulent city. The spirit which had been kindled by Stefano Porcaro still burned in the hearts of some of the Roman youth, but showed itself in a desire for licence rather than for liberty. A band of three hundred youths, many of respectable families, enrolled themselves under Tiburzio and Valeriano, the two sons of Angelo de' Maso, who had been executed for his share in Porcaro's plot. They levied blackmail on the citizens, committed outrages with impunity, and filled the city with alarm. The governor, afraid of a rebellion if he called the citizens to arms, judged it prudent to withdraw from his palace in the Campo dei Fiori to the more secure shelter of the Vatican. This open show of incompetence emboldened the rioters, till at last one of them, who went by the appropriate nickname of Inamorato, seized and carried off a girl on her way to her wedding. The magistrates, driven to action, imprisoned Inamorato; his comrades captured one of the senator's household in return, and entrenched themselves in the Pantheon, where they obtained supplies by raids on the neighbouring houses, till at last, after nine days, the magistrates, fearing the end of such confusion, negotiated an exchange of prisoners, and Inamorato went free. The rioters in the city were supported by the barons of the Campagna, the Colonna, the Savelli, and Everso of Anguillara. The governor was afraid that, if he took strong measures against Roman citizens, he would not be supported

Troubles  
in Rome.  
1460.

<sup>1</sup> *Comm.*, 108.

by the citizens themselves, and might give occasion to an invasion from without. The Pope's nephew, Antonio, on his way to Naples, made an attempt to capture some of the rioters, but they retreated into the palace of Cardinal Capranica, and Antonio was afraid to commence a siege. Tiburzio ruled Rome as a king, and did as he chose in all things. At last the chief citizens warned him that they could no longer endure this anarchy, and begged him to depart peaceably from the city. Tiburzio graciously consented, knowing that he could return when he pleased. He was escorted to the gates by the magistrates, as though he were some mighty prince, and the people thronged to witness his departure. Soon after this a band of rioters broke into the nunnery of S. Agnese, violated the nuns, and plundered the sacred vessels.

Pius II. was not to be moved from his pleasant quarters in Siena by these disorders so long as they only affected the citizens of Rome. It became a different thing when they threatened to imperil the States of the Church. Piccinino thought the opportunity favourable for an inroad into the Roman territory, and marched to Rieti; he was joined by the Colonna and Savelli, and plundered far and wide. At the same time a messenger between the Colonna and the Prince of Taranto was seized in Rome, and confessed that he was negotiating a scheme for seizing Rome in the interests of Jean of Anjou, the Roman barons, and Tiburzio. Pius II. wrote for help in great agitation to Francesco Sforza, who testily exclaimed that his alliance with the Pope gave him more trouble than all his enemies.<sup>1</sup> However, he wrote to the Pope exhorting him to return to Rome, and all would still be well.

On September 10 Pius II. left Siena with tears at the thought that he might never revisit it. He journeyed over Orvieto to Viterbo, where envoys from Rome greeted him. The Pope, in his reply, dwelt on his unwillingness to leave Rome, and his regret

Return of  
Pius II.  
to Rome.  
October 7,  
1460.

<sup>1</sup> Simoneta, p. 717.

that his health had prevented him from returning sooner ; he grieved over the disturbances during his absence, and praised the Romans for their loyalty. ‘What city,’ he continued, ‘is freer than Rome? You pay no taxes, you sell your wine and corn at what price you choose, you fill the most honourable magistracies, and your houses bring you in good rents. Who also is your ruler? Is it count or marquis, duke, king, or emperor? Greater still is he whom you obey—the Roman Pontiff, successor of S. Peter, Vicar of Jesus Christ, whose feet all men desire to kiss. You show your wisdom in reverencing such a lord ; for he enriches you and brings you the world’s wealth ; you feed the Roman Curia, and it feeds you and brings you gold from every land.’ They were fine words, but poor comfort for the absence of government from which Rome during the last year had been suffering.

As Piccinino was threatening Rome, many of the Cardinals counselled that they should go no farther ; but Pius II. proceeded, though he found scanty preparations made for his entertainment, and could only get rustic fare. When the governor and senator advanced to meet him, they found the Pope reclining beside a well, and trying by an early dinner to eke out the scanty supper of the previous night. Six miles from Rome he was greeted by the Conservators with a band of Roman youths, who had come to carry his litter. Many advised him to beware of these youths, who had belonged to the Tiburtian band. ‘I will walk on the asp and the basilisk,’ said Pius II. with a smile, ‘and will trample on the lion and dragon.’ The rebels carried him safely, and on October 7 Pius II. entered his capital.

The conspirators still continued their plots ; but their rashness proved their ruin. One of them, Bonanno Specchio, entered the city secretly, and was there joined by Valeriano and others. An informer warned the Pope, and an ambush was laid for them in the Colosseum, where Bonanno was taken prisoner, though Valeriano and the others escaped. Tiburzio heard

Suppression of the  
Roman  
revolt.  
October  
31, 1460.

of this at Palombaria, a castle of the Savelli, near Tivoli, where he had his head-quarters. Thinking that his brother also was a prisoner, he hurried to Rome to the rescue with a band of only fourteen men. He raised the cry of 'Liberty,' and called on the citizens to rise. 'It is too late,' was the general answer. The Papal body-guard advanced against the rebels, who fled outside the city and hid in the brush-wood. They were hunted by dogs, and were trapped like pheasants among the grass.<sup>1</sup> Tiburzio, with his hands tied behind his back, was led into the city, surrounded by a crowd, who mocked the king, the tribune, the restorer of ancient liberty. Tiburzio only asked for speedy death, and the Pope interfered to prevent him from being tortured. On October 31 Tiburzio, Bonanno, and six others were hanged in the Capitol. In the following March eleven others of his confederates shared the same fate.

The Roman plot thus ended in entire failure; but Pius II. was helpless to reduce the rebellious barons or free himself from Piccinino at Rieti. He had brought with him to Rome only a small band of horsemen, and had no troops save those in Naples. He wrote in distress to Sforza, even to Florence, for aid; <sup>2</sup> but Florence saw no reason to interfere, and Sforza was not sorry to give his troublesome ally a lesson, as Pius II. had just given another instance of his readiness to take advantage of Ferrante. Terracina, which Pius II. had granted to Ferrante for ten years, had been taken by the Angevins; but the people unwillingly endured the French yoke, and called for the protection of the Papal troops. The Pope's nephew Antonio became master of the city; and the Pope, instead of restoring it to Ferrante, conferred it on Antonio, to the great wrath of Ferrante and the Duke of Milan. Still they could not entirely abandon their ally; and during the winter the troops of Sforza and Federigo of Urbino, feebly

<sup>1</sup> 'Obvolutis sub herba capitibus in morem fasaniarum avium comperti per pedes abstracti sunt.'—*Pii II. Comment.*, 119.

<sup>2</sup> Raynaldus, 1460, Nos. 70, 71.

aided by Antonio Piccolomini, forced Piccinino to quit the Papal States, and reduced the Savelli to submit. Pius II., like most of his successors, trusted not so much to any definite organisation or government to keep peace and order in his own dominions, as to foreign help rendered on grounds of political necessity. He spent the winter in restoring order in Rome, haranguing the Romans on the advantage of the Papal Government, and receiving complaints against Gismondo Malatesta, which he appointed Cardinal Cusa as his commissioner to investigate.

In the spring of 1461 Ferrante showed great activity in recovering the castles near Naples, and some of the barons who had joined the Angevin side began to return to his allegiance. These signs of a reaction in his favour made him more anxious to hold his party together. He promised the Pope to confer on the nephew Antonio the hand of his illegitimate daughter Maria and the Duchy of Amalfi. Antonio at the head of the Papal forces went to justify these promises in the field, but was not very successful. The decision of the Neapolitan war was suddenly transferred from Naples to Genoa, where an attack of the exiled party of the Adorni and Fregosi on March 10 succeeded in raising the city on their side and drove the French into the citadel. Charles VII. of France at once sent reinforcements to their succour, and René of Anjou set out himself for Genoa. But the Genoese, supported by Sforza, fell upon the French troops and nearly annihilated them. René, unfortunate as ever, had to withdraw hastily to Marseilles. The French garrison in the castle was driven to surrender. Genoa was again free from French influence ; the Angevin party in Naples saw itself cut off from supplies, and deprived of its chief support. In Naples itself nothing of moment was done, save that the brave Albanian leader, Scanderbeg, brought to the aid of Ferrante a troop of 800 horse, who distinguished themselves by a few plundering raids, and then departed to the worthier task of defending their own land against the Turk.

Rising of  
Genoa  
against the  
French.  
March,  
1461.

Pius II. meanwhile saw his home troubles disappearing. Rome was quiet; Piccinino had gone: the rebellious barons were reduced: his nephew Antonio was prospering in Naples. In June, 1461, the Pope gratified his love for Siena and his desire to exercise his oratory by canonising Catherine of Siena, the Bull of whose canonisation he tells us that he dictated himself. Anxious to escape the summer heat in Rome, he departed early in July for Tivoli, under the escort of Federigo of Urbino, with ten squadrons of horse. 'The Pope was pleased with the flash of arms, the trappings of men and horses, as the sun gleamed on shields, breast-plates, nodding plumes, and forests of lances. The youths galloped on all sides, and made their horses move in circles; they brandished their swords, levelled their spears, and engaged in mimic contests. Federigo, who was a well-read man, asked the Pope if the great heroes of antiquity had been armed like men of our day. The Pope answered that in Homer and Virgil mention was made of every arm now in use, and many that were used no longer. So they fell talking about the Trojan war, which Federigo wished to make little of; while the Pope asserted that it must have been great to leave such a memory behind. Then they talked about Asia Minor, and were not quite agreed about its boundaries. So the Pope afterwards used a little leisure at Tivoli to write a description of Asia Minor from Ptolemy, Strabo, Pliny, Q. Curtius, Solinus, and Pomponius Mela, and other ancient writers.' <sup>1</sup> So ready was Pius II. to receive pleasure from outward impressions, so active was his mind to turn with unabated freshness to a new topic of interest. In Tivoli Pius II. began the rebuilding of the citadel, so as to have a strong fortress of defence for the Papal territory, and busied himself in the reorganisation of the monastery, from which he ejected the Conventuals and established Observants in their stead.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comm.*, 136.



Eighteen months had now passed since the end of the Congress of Mantua, and nothing had been done in the matter of a crusade. The Neapolitan war had absorbed all the forces of the Pope and all the military resources of Italy; nor was Germany more free from political complications. Bessarion, in spite of the infirmities of age, hastened from Mantua in the winter storms to be present at the Diet of Nürnberg on March 2, 1460. Few princes appeared, and they paid no heed to Bessarion; for attention was all directed to the war which was imminent between Albert of Brandenburg, the friend of the Pope and Emperor, and Lewis of Bavaria, the leader of the opposition to the Emperor. Soon the war broke out and ended in the rapid discomfiture of Albert, who was obliged to surrender all that his opponent claimed. The Emperor suffered by this defeat of his chief partisan, and became more powerless than ever. Bessarion sorrowfully went to Vienna to hold there the second Diet, which had been resolved at Mantua. Not till the middle of September did the Diet meet; and then none of the princes appeared in person. In vain Bessarion reminded their representatives of the promises made at Mantua; in vain he asked them to agree to the levying of a tenth in Germany. They answered with many protestations of zeal, but said that they had no powers to do anything definite. The Germans were lukewarm, and Bessarion was not the man to conciliate them. In vain he employed his eloquence; his words seemed only to be twice-told tales.<sup>1</sup> The only means that Pius II. could devise for kindling the zeal of Germany was to offer the title of general of the crusading army to the Pfalzgraf Frederick, the military leader of the dominant party. Frederick refused the proffered honour, and Bessarion, early in 1461, left Germany, vexed and dispirited.

Yet the Pope was not entirely free from blame for the dissensions of Germany. There, as in Italy, the require-

Fruitless  
Diets in  
Germany.  
1460-  
1461.

<sup>1</sup> Pii II. *Comm.*, 126: 'Verba ejus quasi fabulas exceperunt'.

ments of ecclesiastical politics were a disturbing cause. Further  
 quarrel of  
 Cusa and  
 Sigismund  
 of Austria.  
 1460. Pius II. could not unreservedly put himself at the head of a united Christendom, because the needs of the Papal policy led him to take a part in creating internal dissensions. The quarrel between Cardinal Cusa and Sigismund of the Tyrol had only been patched up at Mantua, and broke out afresh immediately upon Cusa's departure to his bishopric. Neither party had any confidence in the legal termination of their disputes. Hostilities were carried on by both alike. At length Sigismund determined on making a bold stroke. In April, 1460, Cusa was at Bruneck negotiating with Sigismund, displaying his usual obstinacy, and threatening to betake himself again to the Pope. Sigismund sent him a formal defiance, as did also most of the vassals of the Church of Brixen. Gathering his forces, Sigismund closed round Bruneck, and Cusa found himself a prisoner in his hands. He granted all that Sigismund demanded, with the intention of protesting that it was extorted by violence. As soon as he could escape he fled to the Pope at Siena and clamoured for aid. Pius II. would willingly have escaped a conflict; but he could not overlook violence offered to a Cardinal, and behind Sigismund stood the hated Gregory Heimburg, the representative of the German opposition to the Papacy. The Pope issued an admonition to Sigismund, in which he declared that his criminality was proved by its notoriety, and had involved him in the penalty of excommunication: he was willing, however, to hear him personally, and summoned him to a consistory to be held on August 4. Sigismund in reply assumed that the Pope was ignorant of Cusa's encroachments on the rights of the Count of the Tyrol, which had made his capture at Bruneck a necessary step. He detailed his grievances, and appealed to a better instructed Pope. Sigismund's attitude was conciliatory, but decided; he stood on the ground of the conciliar movement against the arbitrary action of an individual Pope, and by so doing interposed a technical objection against the

validity of the coming sentence, while he still left the dispute open to friendly settlement.

But Cusa would be satisfied with nothing but unconditional submission to his demands, and the Pope was determined to do away with every trace of the conciliar heresy. The Emperor also was glad to see Sigismund in trouble, as he had shown himself a dangerous neighbour. Accordingly, when August 4 arrived, and Dr. Blumenau, as Sigismund's proctor, handed in the appeal, the Pope's wrath broke out against him. He was seized and imprisoned as a heretic for drawing up and presenting an appeal contrary to the Bull 'Execrabilis'. Blumenau escaped, and fled in terror across the Alps to his master. On August 8 the Pope declared that the penalty of excommunication had been incurred by Sigismund, all who had joined with him in defying Cusa, all who had been hostile to Cusa, and especially the inhabitants of Bruneck. He followed this by declaring the dominions of Sigismund under an interdict and took the see of Brixen under the Papal protection till its bishop could return.

Sigismund was prepared for this, and knew that excommunication and interdict had little force when directed against an entire people. The men of the Tyrol gathered round their Count, and so long as they stood by him he had little to fear. On August 13 Heimbürg drew up for Sigismund a second appeal, in which he said that, as all human judgment might err, the remedy of appeals had been devised by our forefathers as a help for the oppressed. As the Pope's conduct showed that his ears were closed to justice, it was useless to appeal to him when better instructed: 'We appeal, therefore, to a future Pope, who may revise the doings of his predecessor; further, to a General Council, to be held in accordance with the decrees of Constance and Basel. Nor is this appeal a subterfuge, as we do not wish to avoid the course of natural justice. As the Pope has rendered himself notoriously suspected, we will accept any impartial judge

Pius II.  
threatens  
Sigis-  
mund with  
excommu-  
nication.  
August,  
1460.

Sigis-  
mund's  
protest  
against  
the Pope.  
August,  
1460.

whom he may name; we do not refuse his sentence as president of a General Council. If this be denied us, we appeal further to the whole people of our Saviour Jesus Christ; we appeal to all who love justice and favour innocence. If this be denied us, we call God to witness that it is not our fault that justice is not done, and that we are oppressed.'<sup>1</sup> This spirited document was meant for general publication; it was addressed directly to the public opinion of Christendom, and was fixed on the church doors even of Florence and Siena.

A war of writings now began. Pius justified himself and denounced Sigismund in letters addressed to all Christian people. Cusa attacked the life and character of Sigismund. Heimburg, in moderate language, but with many cutting references to the early life of the Pope, detailed the grievances of his master. So indignant was the Pope against Heimburg that he did not scruple to write to the magistrates of Nürnberg and Würzburg, ordering them to seize Heimburg's goods which were in their cities, and bidding them no longer harbour one whom he called a 'child of the devil, the father of lies'.<sup>2</sup> Not content with this, the Pope called on all the powers of Germany to seize Heimburg, wherever he might be, and hand him over to the judgment of the Church.

Heimburg's reply breathed the scornful honesty which characterised his entire life. He is a noticeable figure in the history of these times as the representative of German as opposed to Italian culture, as the determined opponent of the subtilty by which Æneas Sylvius had won back Germany for the Papacy, as the resolute supporter of ecclesiastical reform for his country. The personal antipathy of the two men lent a zest to the struggle between Heimburg

<sup>1</sup> This remarkable document is given in Goldast, *Monarchia*, ii., 1587, and in Freher, *Rerum Germanicarum Scriptores* (ed. Struvius), ii., 201.

<sup>2</sup> 'Quidam ex patre diabolo mendaciorum natus, Gregorius de Heimburg,' in Goldast, *Monarchia*, ii., 1591; also in Ebendorffer, 'Chronicon Austriacum,' in Pez, *Rev. Aust. Scriptores*, ii., 930, where also is Heimburg's answer.

and the Pope; and Heimbург never forgot in the Vicar of Christ the shifty secretary of Frederick III. The dignity of the Pope would not allow him to answer Heimbург's personal thrusts; but he keenly felt that the laugh was turned against him by Heimbург's dexterous references to his past career. The answer of Heimbург to the Pope's proceedings against himself is the most powerful statement of the position of the German reformers in that day.

He begins by complaining that the Pope has condemned him unheard, unsummoned, by his own arbitrary power. He has given no grounds, except that Christ set S. Peter as ruler over His Church, and therefore that rebellion against the successor of S. Peter is heresy. But Christ gave commandment to all the Apostles to teach all nations; and the successors of the Apostles as a body are General Councils which ought, from time to time, to revise the actions of the Pope and correct his errors. The superstition which Pius II. is trying to set up, that the Pope is greater than a Council, must be overthrown. The Pope appeals to the Congress of Mantua in support of his decree; but that Congress was not a Council, but an assembly of ambassadors. The decree was made by the Pope and Cardinals simply that they might pillage Germany under the pretext of a crusade, and might not be hindered by any threat of a Council. 'A Council, the fostering mother of liberty, the Pope shudders at as though it were an offspring of unlawful passion; by a monstrous decree he condemned it before its birth, and by his condemnation justified. His prohibition showed his fear; his condemnation has given life to what was almost obscured by long silence. He would have been more prudent if he had imitated Solon, who, when asked why he had enacted no special penalty against parricide, answered, "Lest by forbidding I might suggest". Wherefore, prelates of Germany, hold to this point of the Council as the strongest fortress of your freedom. If the Pope succeed in carrying it, he will tax you at his pleasure, will take your money for a crusade, and send it to Ferrante of Naples.

For the Pope is fond of bastards ; for that reason he calls Heimburg "a child of the devil," because he was born in lawful wedlock. He calls Heimburg also greedy, turbulent, lying. If he strove with blessings, he would be answered ; as he strives with curses, he must find another to reply. I am not such a one. My goods are less than my deserts ; I have done more work than I have received pay ; I have always loved liberty more than flattery. These are no signs of greed. Let the Pope consider his own past and the life he once led.

'I leave these personal matters and go back to the Pope's decree. If the whole body of the Apostles was above Peter, a Council is above the Pope. If an appeal can be made to the Pope during a vacancy, it can be made to a Council which is not summoned ; for the power of the Church, like the Church itself, never dies. By forbidding such an appeal the Pope treats us like slaves, and wishes to take for his own pleasures all that we and our ancestors have gained by our honest labour. The Pope calls me a chatterer—the Pope, who is himself more talkative than a magpie. I own I have given some attention to the windiness of words, but I have never for that neglected the study of civil and canon law ; the Pope has never even smelt at them, but has contented himself with sheer verbosity. I profess myself a member of the lawyer tribe ; the Pope is one of those who think that everything can be managed by the force and artifice of a rhetorician. If the Pope excommunicates me for talking, who deserves the penalty more than himself, who has no merit save wordiness ? The Pope declares me guilty of treason ; he is using a flynet to catch an eagle.<sup>1</sup> He calls me a heretic because I say a Council is above the Pope ; I call him a heretic because he says that the Pope is above a Council. He orders my goods to be confiscated ; I trust that I live amongst those who count my services as of more

<sup>1</sup> Heimburg makes a pun here which is untranslatable : 'Irretiat ipse Reatinos suos, aut eos, quos servili metu constrictos habet ; mecum erit (Deoduce) libertas Diogenis et Catonis'.



value than any gain they could expect from my possessions. He says that they who seize my goods will do a service to the Catholic Church ; such a statement would be ridiculous if we had not seen at Mantua the Pope's folly when he, with a flow of words, praised adultery and illegitimacy.

‘So much for the Pope's charges. Yet all men may appeal from an inferior to a superior tribunal. Like the woman who appealed from Philip drunk to Philip sober, I appeal from the Pope angry to the Pope appeased, from the tropical orator to the same man when his fit of wind is over, when he has sent away the Muses and has turned to the canon law. In the second place, I appeal to him, if he will bind himself to judge according to the decision of a good man. In the third place, I appeal to any man above suspicion to whom the Pope may choose to delegate the matter. In the fourth place, I submit myself to the judgment of the Pope, if he will remove all cause for suspicion. Finally, if the Pope condemn all these, nothing remains save to appeal to the Universal Church, as men of old appealed from the Senate to the Roman people. Let not the Pope object that the Church is not assembled ; that is not my fault, but his.’

This answer of Heimburg's was largely circulated throughout Europe, and Pius II. keenly felt its bitter sarcasm. By his attack on Heimburg the Pope had made a serious mistake : he had given a private person an opportunity of making an onslaught on personal grounds upon the Papacy. So long as Heimburg was writing in Sigismund's name, he could only speak on general grounds of ecclesiastical grievances. By attempting to crush a private person, Pius II. exposed himself to the indignity of a private attack, which it was beneath his lofty position to answer or even to recognise. One of his friends in the Curia, Teodoro de' Lelli, Bishop of Feltre, answered in the Pope's behalf, and asserted in the strongest terms the principles of the restored Papacy—the necessity of a Papal monarchy over the Church, the divine institution of the rights

Controversy with Heimburg.

of S. Peter and his successors. He paid back the sneers of Heimbürg with the contemptuous vituperation which the language of ecclesiastical controversy has always bestowed on one who can be branded with the name of heretic.<sup>1</sup> This only gave Heimbürg an opportunity of returning to the charge. 'Like a Molossian hound,' he said, 'I will track my prey even through the snow.' He scoffed at Lelli as the Pope's stalking-horse, content to put his vanities into shape and bear blows on his behalf. The Pope himself will do nothing. 'If you were to put before him the library of Ptolemy you would not call him away from his care for Corsignano and the Piccolomini. But if your other follies, Lelli, turn out as well as this you will get your reward, and your crown will soon be red with a Cardinal's hat.' He hit Cusa, calling him 'a hard and rigid man, stern, ungenial, inexorable, vehement in stirring up others, keen in discovering those who can help him or hurt his adversary, with no wisdom to help himself, and no restraint over his passion'. He next considered the proceedings of the Congress of Mantua, whither he went himself to test the Pope's sincerity. 'I laid before him and the Cardinals obvious considerations of the difficulties in the way of a crusade. I urged that it must be a decided success, or it would do more harm than good. I showed that agreement amongst the soldiers was necessary for success, and pleaded that the establishment of peace between the Emperor and the King of Hungary was the first step to be taken. I spoke to the dead; I told my story to the deaf. All the juice of the Jubilee was exhausted, and the Pope and Cardinals were seeking something on which to fasten like leeches. You, Cardinal Cusa, answered my arguments for prudence by saying, "Let us lay all this aside, and put our trust only in God,"—which was the same as saying that rashness and not wisdom ought to direct affairs. This is the heresy of Gregory Heimbürg,—his con-

<sup>1</sup> The pamphlet of Lelli and Heimbürg's answer are given in Goldast, *Monarchia*, 1595, and in Freher, ii., 228. The greater part of both is taken up with technical arguments for and against the Papal supremacy.

stancy in resisting the Pope's avarice, his persistency in giving wise advice. This is his sacrilege,—his plea for liberty, his support of the oppressed, his defence of General Councils, which the Mantuan decree aimed at overthrowing. This is his treason : he disturbed the Papal plot for taming Germany.' The defence of Lelli had only given Heimbург a chance of going further in his attack upon the whole policy of the Pope.

Pius II. no doubt had been led by Cusa to think that a little determination on his part would raise the Tyrol in rebellion against Sigismund, and would bring upon him many foreign foes. The Pope was careful in his interdicts to save all the rights of the House of Austria : neither the Emperor nor his brother Albert was to be injured, and might, if they chose, seize the Tyrol for themselves. But no one stirred against Sigismund. The Pope vainly tried to incite the Swiss ; but they preferred to use the opportunity to make a peace which satisfied their own interests. The Pope appealed on all sides for some one to punish Sigismund ; but even his ally the Duke of Milan refused to move, and would not allow the excommunication to be published in his dominions. In this state of things Pius II. felt himself bound, at least, to do something ; and, by way of opening up a new stage in the proceedings, which might possibly lead to new negotiations, he issued on January 23, 1461, a citation to Sigismund and his associates to appear within sixty days and answer to a charge of heresy. The citation called Sigismund 'a principal limb of Satan,' declared him suspected of the heresy which is above all other heresies, of not believing the article of the Creed, 'I believe in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church,' seeing that he refused to heed the censures of the Pope, who was the head of that Church.<sup>1</sup> Probably the Pope thought that by transferring the matter to a doctrinal ground he might open a way to reconciliation.

Citation  
of Sigis-  
mund.  
January,  
1461.

<sup>1</sup> In Freher, ii., 191.

But Sigismund and Heimbург remained true to their policy of appeal, and answered by renewing it. Further appeal of Sigismund. The Pope summoned Sigismund for despising his censures—he did not recognise the validity of those censures. The Pope summoned Sigismund's adherents to Rome, more than 100,000 men; who was to nurse the children and look after the country in their absence? Did he wish to drive a whole people into banishment? What had rustics to do with disputes about the Creed, which was the business of theologians? Sigismund believed in the Church of the Apostles' Creed and of the Nicene Creed; but the Creed did not ask him to believe in the Church in the same way as he believed in the persons of the Trinity. He could not say anything about the obedience required by the Pope and Cusa, lest he should be called to worship a creature instead of the Creator.<sup>1</sup> He renewed his appeal to a future Council, which the Pope, contrary to the decrees of Constance, was striving to bind and fetter. The Pope took no notice of this appeal, but in the greater excommunication, issued on Maundy Thursday, Sigismund and Heimbург appeared in the same class as Wyclifites, Pirates, and Saracens.

As the next step in the controversy, Cardinal Cusa wrote an anonymous pamphlet, with the object of separating Sigismund from Heimbург. He besought Sigismund to return to the Christian faith and shake off the man who had so long misled him. Heimbург retorted, and at once exposed his anonymous foe. 'Crab, Cusa, Nicolas,' he began, playing on Cusa's family name of Krebs, 'who call yourself Cardinal of Brixen, why do you not come openly into the lists?' In this strain he answered Cusa's statements one by one, and repeated his own arguments.<sup>2</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> 'Jam satis respondimus nos credere unam sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam; non autem in illam, ne latram soli Deo debitam creaturæ et facturæ impendamus.'—Freher, 195. He draws a difference between 'Credo in ecclesiam' and 'Credo ecclesiam'.

<sup>2</sup> In Goldast, *Monarchia*, ii., 1624. Freher, ii., 255.

was clear that Heimburg was a dangerous controversialist, and that he and Sigismund stood firm in their position.

Nor was the quarrel with Sigismund the only one in which Pius II. was engaged in Germany. In 1459 the Archbishop of Mainz died, and there were two candidates for the vacant office, Diether of Isenburg and Adolf of Nassau; each had three

Strife  
about the  
Arch-  
bishopric  
of Mainz.  
1459-61.

votes in the Chapter, and the seventh vote, which decided the election, was said to have been secured by bribery in favour of Diether. When the representative of Diether sought the pallium from the Pope in Mantua, Pius II. wished to use the opportunity. First he required that Diether should assent to the levy of a Turkish tithe in Germany; then he summoned him to appear at Mantua. Diether sent his excuses and a proctor to arrange about the payment of annates, which were negotiated by bonds drawn on the bankers of the Curia. These obligations he afterwards repudiated, alleging that his proctor had been induced to promise more than the ordinary payment. He refused to go to Rome when summoned, brought his complaints before the Diet, spoke of a future Council, and welcomed Heimburg at his court. His object clearly was to frighten the Curia and escape the payment of the money which had been promised on his behalf. The judges of the Papal Camera pronounced an excommunication against Diether for not paying his debts. Diether replied that he had offered to pay all that his predecessors had paid; if that was refused, he appealed to a future Council.

The differences with Sigismund of the Tyrol and with the Archbishop of Mainz were troublesome enough in themselves; but they began to wear a more serious aspect in the light of the movement in German politics, which agitated the end of the year 1460. It became clear that King George of Bohemia was scheming to depose Frederick and obtain the Imperial crown. Already the plan of setting aside the feeble Frederick had often been mooted; the defeat of Frederick's chief

Scheme  
for the de-  
position of  
Frederick  
III. 1460-  
61.

ally, the Markgraf of Brandenburg, and the power of the Bohemian king, gave a new impulse to the wish to have a reorganisation of Germany under a competent head. In Church matters George of Bohemia purposed to work for the summons of a Council, and sent Heimbürg to secure the co-operation of Charles VII. of France. Secretly a scheme was formed between George of Bohemia and the Pfalzgraf: the Archbishop of Mainz was only too willing to join in anything that would overthrow the Emperor and the Pope. The Archbishop of Trier and the Elector of Saxony were both related to the Emperor, and could hardly be won over, unless the Markgraf of Brandenburg set them an example. A Diet at Nürnberg, March, 1461, called on the Emperor to reform the empire and war against the Turk; it invited him to appear personally at a Diet in Frankfort in June, when the conspirators hoped to proceed to a new election.

The Emperor and the Pope were now genuinely alarmed. Pius II. wrote letters to all the German princes, defending his action in the matter of the Turkish tithe. The Emperor began to negotiate peace with Hungary, and forbade the meeting of the Diet at Frankfort. The citizens of Frankfort sided with the Emperor and closed their gates against the princes. Instead of a Diet in Frankfort an assembly was held in Mainz, at which the only Electors present were the Pfalzgraf and Diether of Mainz. The Pope sent representatives, and Heimbürg came to plead the wrongs of Sigismund of the Tyrol. The discussions turned almost entirely on ecclesiastical matters; but Diether was only seeking his own interest, and was easily won over to withdraw his appeal to a Council and submit himself to the Pope's indulgence. Still he did not trust the Pope, nor could the Pope trust him. Pius II. was secretly engaged in taking measures to overthrow Diether, and his emissaries were busy at Mainz. The assembly separated without any definite conclusion. Matters in Germany advanced into a new stage by the outbreak of a war

Alarm of  
Pope and  
Emperor.



between the Emperor and his brother Albert of Austria, who, in August, 1461, advanced with his forces against Vienna.

It was of great importance to cause a diversion in Germany, and Pius II. was ready to do so by attacking Diether of Mainz. He had sent John of Flassland, Dean of Basel, as a confidential agent to Mainz, and John had succeeded in raising a party against Diether. It was agreed that the Pope should depose Diether, and set up in his stead Adolf of Nassau, whom the Archbishop of Trier, the Markgraf of Baden, the Count of Wirtemberg, and others, promised to support. Secretly John collected evidence against Diether and bore it back to Pius II. in his summer retreat at Tivoli. There, with equal secrecy, Pius II. laid the evidence before the five Cardinals who were with him. They agreed that the charges against Diether were matters of notoriety, and that a regular process against him was unnecessary. On August 21, Pius II. issued a Bull deposing Diether;<sup>1</sup> at the same time Adolf was appointed, by a Papal provision, archbishop in his stead. Armed with these documents, John of Flassland hurried back to Mainz. Adolf gathered his friends around him, took Diether by surprise, and was enthroned on October 2. Diether made his escape, called on the Pfalzgraf for help, and renewed his appeal to a future Council. Both sides gathered their forces round them and prepared for war.

Thus, in the middle of 1461 Pius II. saw in Germany also his crusading policy rendered useless by the conflict between a large policy of European interest and a policy of small expediency. The Pope might preach a crusade, might exhort Europe to peace, but the question was, Where was peace to begin? The Pope did not see his way to set an example of patience. He could not afford to let himself be smitten on one cheek without resistance, for he was afraid lest he should be smitten also

Deposition of Diether of Mainz, August, 1461.

Dissensions in Germany. 1461.

<sup>1</sup> The matter is told by Pius II., *Comment.*, 143, etc., and in his Bull, Raynaldus, 1461, 21. Diether's side is given by Bodman in *Rheinischen Archiv*, iv., 7, etc.

on the other. So far from pacifying Germany, he was a cause of dissension: in Mainz and in the Tyrol alike there was warfare in the name of the Holy See. We cannot wonder that the princes of Germany were equally jealous of their own rights, and were more eager to use every opportunity of asserting their own interests than to promote the well-being of Christendom. Germany was distracted by intrigues and divided into parties. The war of Albert of Austria against the Emperor attracted all its attention.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PIUS II. AND HIS RELATIONS TO FRANCE AND BOHEMIA.

1461—1464.

IF Pius II. found nothing but disappointment and trouble in Germany, he had more cheering prospects in France. Charles VII. died on July 22, 1461, and from his successor, Louis XI., the Papacy expected great things. The Dauphin Louis had been on bad terms with his father, had fled from France, and, for the last five years of his father's life, had been a refugee in the Court of the Duke of Burgundy. As an outcast and a dependent Louis thought it wise to make friends where he could. He had entered into friendly relations with the Pope, whose aid might stand him in good stead if any attempt were made to set him aside from the succession. On the death of Charles VII. Louis returned in haste to France, and was surprised to find that he met with no opposition. But Pius II. did not forget the promises made by the exile, and on August 20 sent Jean Geoffroy, Bishop of Arras, as his legate to France to urge the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction.

Accession  
of Louis  
XI. in  
France.  
July, 1461.

It was natural that the Papacy should hate the Pragmatic Sanction with a bitter hatred. It was the standing memorial of the conciliar movement, and kept alive in Europe its principles and its endeavours. Moreover, it was a memorial of national opposition to the theory of the Universal Church: it expressed the claim of a temporal ruler to arrange at his pleasure the affairs of

The Pa-  
pacy and  
the Prag-  
matic  
Sanction.

the Church within his realms. So long as France retained the Pragmatic Sanction she gave an example to which other countries might appeal, and was a standing threat to the Papal power. So long as the Pragmatic Sanction remained unrepealed, the restored Papacy could not claim to have entirely re-established its authority. The position of France was founded on the decrees of Constance and Basel, and France was bound to sympathise with any movement which had for its object the assertion of the supremacy of a Council over the Pope.

Not only was the theory of the Pragmatic Sanction opposed to the principles of the Papal monarchy, but its working was still more prejudicial to the Papal interests. Grants of benefices in expectancy were entirely lost to the Pope, and reservations were only allowed to the smaller posts. Annates were not paid, and appeals to Rome were only made in important matters. The power of raising money in France was largely forbidden to the Pope, and the Curia saw an important source of revenue removed from its grasp. It was not to be expected that the Papacy should endure without a struggle this diminution of its authority. Eugenius IV. protested against the Pragmatic Sanction, and refused to recognise it. Nicolas V. trusted to the growth of the Papal prestige to overcome the opposition of France. Calixtus III. raised the question more decidedly by sending Cardinal Alain of Avignon as *legatus a latere* to raise Turkish tithes in France. Charles VII., however, would not let him exercise his functions except by his permission, and made him execute a document that he would do nothing contrary to the royal pleasure, or against the liberties of the Gallican Church as secured by the Pragmatic Sanction.<sup>1</sup> The King granted leave to collect tithes from the clergy, on the condition that the money was spent on building galleys at Avignon. He was true to the national principle that French gold was not to be taken to

<sup>1</sup> *Preuves des Libertés de l' Eglise Gallicaine*, ed. 1651, 496.

Rome, and he probably had even then formed the plan of using the galleys against Genoa or Naples when occasion suited. Yet many of the French clergy, headed by the University of Paris, protested against this Papal taxation and appealed to a future Council. Calixtus III. angrily bade his legate proceed to Paris, rebuke the insolence of the University, and demand the revocation of the appeal.<sup>1</sup> The King had to interpose and settle the difference by a declaration that he had granted the Pope a tithe from reasons of public expediency; though this had been done without the formal assent of the clergy, the King did not thereby intend to derogate from the liberties of the Gallican Church.<sup>2</sup> Charles VII. was firm in his adhesion to the Pragmatic Sanction; and the attack upon it made by Pius II. at Mantua awakened the determined resistance of the French, who regarded it as a political manœuvre of the Pope to justify his support of Ferrante of Naples. When Pius II. issued his Bull 'Execrabilis' France at once accepted the challenge. A Master of the University, Jean Dauvet, as proctor for the King, registered a formal protest that nothing in the Bull should deprive the King of his right to press for the summoning of a Council according to the Constance decrees; if the Pope were to inflict any ecclesiastical censures in France, the King would call on a future Council to judge between him and the Pope; if the Pope refused to summon a Council, the King would instigate the princes of Europe to summon it themselves.<sup>3</sup> Pius II. judged it prudent to take no notice of this protest; but he did not cease in his letters to Charles VII. to urge upon him gently and persuasively the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction.<sup>4</sup>

It must not be supposed that the Pragmatic Sanction was an unmixed good to the Gallican Church. The Papal supremacy had been accepted by the Church throughout Europe because it set up a barrier against royal and aristocratic oppression. As the

Working  
of the  
Pragmatic  
Sanction  
in France.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, 1457, No. 55.      <sup>2</sup> *Preuves des Libertés* (ed. 1651), 566.

<sup>3</sup> See letter in Raynaldus, 1460, 46, etc.

<sup>4</sup> *Preuves*, 229.

Papal sovereignty grew more and more exacting, churchmen were willing to rid themselves of its taxation, which seemed to outweigh the advantages of its protection. The Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges adopted so much of the reforming decrees of Basel as seemed to suit the national needs, and gave them validity for France by a royal decree. Thus the French Church was exempt from the technicalities of the canon law: the decree itself could be explained by royal judges, and left no loophole for Papal interference. Its provisions sounded fair; but they did not in practice come up to all they promised. It enacted that elections to ecclesiastical benefices should be free according to the canons: but this was subject to many exceptions in practice. First, there was the royal right of the *regale*, by which the King enjoyed the revenues of vacant benefices and the disposal of them during vacancies. If disputes arose about the election, as only too often happened, the King had as great an interest in prolonging the vacancy so as to enjoy the revenues, as had the Curia in protracting the appeal that it might receive larger fees. Besides, the nobles used their rights of nomination in such a way as to override the Chapters. Moreover, the Pragmatic Sanction assigned to graduates of the Universities a third of all vacancies, on the ground of encouraging learning. The Universities were not slow to claim their privilege, and were skilful in extending its limits. The jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters was exercised by the Parlement and the University of Paris; and these bodies did not show themselves more disinterested or more expeditious than the Curia had been. It is doubtful whether the Gallican Church was more free from practical abuses under the Pragmatic Sanction than it had been under the Papal rule;<sup>1</sup> but it made all the difference that at least the oppressors were men of the same nation as the oppressed, that French gold stayed in the kingdom, and did not flow to Rome, where it might be used

<sup>1</sup> See Du Clercq, *Mémoires*, bk. iv., chs. iv, and xxiv,



against the interests of France. There was no murmuring within France itself; the French clergy were all willing to stand by the Pragmatic, and the Pope had no opportunity afforded from within to justify his interference.

Still the position of France was anomalous, and there was some excuse for the view taken of it by Pius II. 'The prelates of France,' he says, 'who thought that they would be made free by the Pragmatic Sanction, were reduced to the most entire slavery and became the creatures of the laity. They were compelled to answer in all causes before the Parlement, to confer benefices at the will of the King, or other princes or nobles, and to ordain unfit persons. They were bidden to pardon men whom they condemned for their misdeeds, and to absolve excommunicated persons without satisfaction. No power was left them of inflicting ecclesiastical censures. Whoever brought into France letters from the Pope which were adverse to the Pragmatic, was liable to the punishment of death. Cognisance of episcopal causes, of metropolitan churches, of marriages, of heresy, was taken by the Parlement. Such was the presumption of the laity that even the most holy body of Christ, borne in procession for the veneration of the people, or being carried to the sick, was bidden to stand still by the mighty hand of the King. Bishops and other prelates, venerable priests, were hurried to the public prisons; estates belonging to the Church, and the goods of clergy, were seized on slight grounds by a decree of a secular judge. The Pragmatic Sanction gave rise to much impiety, sacrilege, heresy, and indecorum, which were either ordered or permitted by the ungrateful King.'<sup>1</sup>

Views of  
Pius II.  
about the  
Pragmatic  
Sanction.

The accession of Louis XI. opened up an alluring prospect to Pius II., who had already negotiated with him for the abolition of the Pragmatic. So bitterly was Louis XI. opposed to his father, that the reversal of his father's policy had in itself a charm

Negotiations of  
Pius II.  
with Louis  
XI.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Commentarii*, 160.

for his mind. On his visit to his father's grave he allowed the Bishop of Terni, who had so grossly misconducted himself as Papal legate in England, to pronounce an absolution over his father's ashes, as though he had died excommunicated for his adhesion to the Pragmatic. The Bishop of Arras was sent by Pius II. to take advantage of this favourable state of mind of the King; and his zeal was spurred by the understanding that a Cardinal's hat was to be the reward of his success. Louis XI. dismissed his father's ministers, and looked coldly on the Parlement and the University by whose aid the Pragmatic Sanction had so long been maintained. His policy was to maintain the royal power in its existing privileges, by the help of the Pope, rather than by the help of the constitution of the realm. It was the task of the Bishop of Arras to negotiate skilfully the details of such an arrangement.

While awaiting the results of this negotiation Pius II. spent the autumn in making an excursion from Country Tivoli to Subiaco, to visit the mighty monasteries life of Pius II. that clustered round the cave of the great S. Benedict. As usual, he enjoyed a leisurely journey by the side of the Anio, and was pleased with the simple homage of the rustic. He would dine by a spring of water, with a crowd of peasants at a respectful distance. When he resumed his journey the peasants plunged into the water to fish, following the Pope in his course. When a fish was caught a loud shout called the Pope's attention to the fact, and the trout were given as a friendly offering to the Pope's attendants.<sup>1</sup> From Subiaco Pius II. paid a visit to Pales-  
trina, and on October 6 returned to Rome.

Soon after his return Pius II. was reminded of his crusad-  
ing scheme, which the current of events had thrust into the background. The luckless Queen Charlotte of Cyprus came to demand help against the Turks. The island of Cyprus had been handed over by  
Visit of the Queen of Cyprus to Rome. 1461.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Comment.*, 197.

Richard I. of England to the House of Lusignan, under whose feeble and profligate rule it had been a medley of Greek and Latin civilisation. It was further distracted by being a field for the commercial rivalry of Venice and Genoa, and was a helpless prey to Egyptian pirates. Queen Charlotte in 1459 had married Louis, son of the Duke of Savoy; but her bastard brother, John, fled to Egypt, offered his homage to the Sultan, and, with the help of an Egyptian fleet, overran Cyprus, shut up Louis in the castle of Cerina, and drove Charlotte to seek for help in Western Europe. She was received at Ostia with royal honours. The Pope was favourably impressed with the Queen, a handsome woman of twenty, with merry eyes, a pleasant address, and stately carriage, who spoke in Greek manner like a torrent, but dressed in French fashion.<sup>1</sup> She poured out her griefs to the Pope, who magnanimously promised that he would never desert her, but pointed out that her misfortunes were due to the lukewarmness of Savoy at the Congress of Mantua. All that he could do was to provide her with means to go to Savoy and plead with her father-in-law. She went to Savoy, but with no result; she could only return to Venice, and thence make her way back to Rhodes.

Meanwhile the Bishop of Arras was rapidly advancing the Pope's interests in France. Pius II. knew well how the national opposition in Germany had been overcome by a secret understanding to the mutual advantage of the King and the Pope, and he practised the same plan in France. The Bishop of Arras promised Louis XI. that the Pope would send a legate to France, who would dispose of benefices at the King's pleasure. Pius II. himself wrote to the King, commending his independent spirit, and urging him to abolish the Pragmatic without taking counsel with any. 'You are wise,' he said, 'and show yourself a great king, who are not ruled, but rule; for he is the best prince who knows

Louis XI.  
abolishes  
the Prag-  
matic  
Sanction.  
Novem-  
ber, 1461.

<sup>1</sup> Pii II. *Comment.*, 179.

and does what is right by himself, as we trust is the case with you.' He adds significantly, 'If your prelates and the University desire anything from us let them use your mediation, for if any Pope was ever well disposed to France, we certainly will be found the chief to honour and love your race and nation, nor will we ever oppose your honourable requests'.<sup>1</sup> Pius II. meant to imply that the King would find a close alliance with the Papacy to be the best way of making the French clergy dependent on himself. Louis XI. kissed the Pope's letter, and ordered it to be placed in a gold box amongst his treasures. On November 27, 1461, he wrote to the Pope announcing the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction, and sent the letter to the Parlement to be registered as a royal ordinance.

Thus Louis XI., by the plenitude of the royal power, swept away the bulwark of the liberties of the Gallican Church, and Pius II. wept with joy to receive the news. Louis XI. had abolished the obnoxious decree without making any conditions; but he expected his reward, and it was a question for the Pope how he could best meet his views. With characteristic astuteness Pius II. used the opportunity first of all for his own advantage. He longed to use his power in the creation of Cardinals, and now laid before the College the necessity of pleasing the French King by creating some French Cardinals; the Ultramontanes had been omitted in the last creation, and their claims ought to be considered. The Cardinals, who were reluctant to see the College increased, were driven unwillingly to consent. Pius II. seized his opportunity, and having secured a majority by private interviews, proposed six creations in a consistory on December 18. The Cardinals sat in silence, and looked at one another. Pius II. at once declared his creations, and the publication was made on the same day, though the Pope was suffering so severely from an attack of the gout that he had to entrust

Creation  
of Car-  
dinals. De-  
cember,  
1461.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 387 (ed. Basel), dated October 26, 1461.

the ceremony to Cardinal Bessarion. The Cardinals created at the request of the French King were the Bishop of Arras and Louis d'Albret, a prince of the blood royal. Besides these were Don Jayme de Cardona, a relative of the King of Aragon; Francesco Gonzaga, son of the Marquis of Mantua, a youth of seventeen; Bartolommeo Rovarella, Bishop of Ravenna, an old official, of great experience in the affairs of the Curia; and Jacopo Ammannati, Bishop of Pavia, the special favourite of Pius II., the only one of the new creations who was a scholar and a man of culture. Pius II. could now plume himself that he had done great things for Louis XI., who 'had obtained two Cardinals from one litter,' as the Pope put it. He also sent him, on Christmas Day, a consecrated sword, with an inscription: 'Let your right hand, Louis, draw me against the furious Turks, and I will be the avenger of the blood of the Greeks. The Empire of Mahomet will fall, and again will the renowned valour of the French, with you for leader, reach to heaven.'<sup>1</sup> This was very pretty, no doubt; but Louis XI. wished for something more substantial. He had been led to suppose that the Pope, in return for the abolition of the Pragmatic, would withdraw from his alliance with Ferrante of Naples, and would even espouse the Angevin side. Pius II. had behaved as though he were wavering in this matter. His ally, Francesco Sforza, had been seriously ill of a fever during the summer, and Sforza's death would have entirely changed the aspect of affairs. Pius II. held himself ready for any contingency; he intimated to Louis XI. that he was weary of the trouble of the Neapolitan war, and thought it better to rule the States of the Church in quietness.<sup>2</sup> But when the abolition

Neapoli-  
tan  
politics.  
1462.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Commentarii*, 184:—

'Exerat in Turcas tua me Ludovice furentes  
Dextera; Graiorum sanguinis ultor ero.  
Corruet imperium Maumetis, et inclyta rursus  
Gallorum virtus te petet astra duce.'

<sup>2</sup> Simoneta, *Vita Sfortiæ*, in Muratori, xxi., 731; he says of Pius II.:  
'Ut erat ingenio astuto callidoque'.

of the Pragmatic Sanction was completed, when Sforza's recovery was assured, and above all the marriage of his nephew Antonio to Maria, the illegitimate daughter of Ferrante, solemnised, Pius II. began to be more resolute, and bethought himself that his honour would not allow him to abandon Ferrante.

French  
envoys in  
Rome.  
March,  
1462.

Pius II. was disappointed to find that the new Cardinal of Arras, so soon as he had gained all that the Pope had to give, transferred his services to the King's side, and became an ardent negotiator in favour of the Angevin claims. He besought the Pope to ensure the favour of Louis XI. by withdrawing from the Neapolitan war. He offered, on the King's behalf, that Ferrante should have Sardinia with the title of king, and the lands of the Prince of Taranto, and that the Pope's nephew, Antonio, should have a portion of Calabria; otherwise Louis XI. would ally with Venice and pour his troops into Milan, so that the Pope would be left single-handed. On March 13, 1462, a French embassy, headed by the Cardinals of Arras and Coutances, entered Rome to announce the abolition of the Pragmatic, and to receive the Pope's answer about Naples. In a public consistory the Cardinal of Arras presented the royal letters abolishing the Pragmatic, spoke much in praise of Louis, and said that so soon as Naples was secured for the Angevin dynasty, and Genoa had again submitted to France, Louis was ready to send 40,000 horse and 30,000 foot against the Turks, drive them from Europe, penetrate into Syria, and recover the Holy Sepulchre. Pius II. was wearied with the pompous and mendacious speech, and anxiously awaited its end.<sup>1</sup> He answered with equally high-sounding praises of Louis XI. and of his predecessors on the French throne; about Naples he briefly said that he would speak privately.<sup>2</sup> He placed the red hat on the Cardinal's head, and proclaimed

<sup>1</sup> *Comment.*, 187: 'Ampullosa miscens verba et aperta mendacia pro veris affirmans . . . expectatum et diu desideratum finem fecit'.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 103.



a general holiday for three days. Rome blazed with bonfires for joy at the Papal triumph in winning back the unconditional allegiance of France.

When the festivities were over the French ambassadors returned to the Pope, who offered to negotiate a truce, or to withdraw his troops, provided the Neapolitan question were referred to a judicial decision of the Curia. This was all that the Pope would promise: and the embassy returned with loud complaints of the Papal ingratitude. If, in France, the abolition of the Pragmatic had been hateful at first, it now seemed a positive indignity. The story was current that Pius II., on receiving the news, had waved his cap and cried out, 'Guerra, guerra' (war, war), meaning that the increased revenues now secured to him would enable him to carry on more vigorously the Neapolitan war. Pius wrote to Louis XI. to contradict this story, and it was even judged wise that Cardinal Ammannati should write in the name of the College and disclaim it.<sup>1</sup> Louis XI. wrote angrily to the Pope to this purport:<sup>2</sup> 'I thought to win your kindness by benefits. I abolished the Pragmatic Sanction; I gave you my free obedience; I promised help against the Turks; I gave a stern answer to innovators who talked about a Council; I could be persuaded to nothing that was contrary to your dignity. Who would not have thought that this would have softened your harshness? But the reverse has happened. You seek to drive from his kingdom my own flesh and blood. What am I to do if kindness will not win your unquiet spirit? Shall I try the opposite way? No, it is not my will to persecute the Vicar of Christ. I will pursue the way I have begun, though there is none of my counsellors who does not advise me otherwise. Perhaps some day you will repent.'

This letter was followed by the Seneschal of Toulouse, a man who knew neither Latin nor Italian, and delivered

<sup>1</sup> *Cardinalis Papiensis Epistolæ*, 18.

<sup>2</sup> We only have the letter given by Pius II., *Comm.*, 207, who says, 'dictavit ad Pontificem in hunc modum epistolam'.

through an interpreter a message that if the Pope did not change his ways, he had orders from the King to bid the French prelates leave the Curia. At first this caused some alarm; but Pius II. was shrewd enough to know that it was a mere threat. He answered that the French prelates might go if they chose; they made a pretence, but did not go. Louis XI. felt that he had been out-manœuvred by the Pope; embassies passed between them fruitlessly, and the national feeling in France only grew more strong against the Papacy.

If Pius II. could flatter himself that he had succeeded in sweeping away from France the memorials of the Council of Basel, he was obliged to confess that he had been deceived in his hopes of obtaining a like result in Bohemia. Pius II. and George of Bohemia. George Podiebrad had lulled the Pope into a false security while he needed time to secure himself on the Bohemian throne, and by the Pope's help had made a truce for three years with the Catholics of Breslau. But the men of Breslau were not so confiding as the Pope, and watched George with suspicion. When at last George began to intrigue for the Imperial crown, Pius II. was driven to admit that his policy was opposed to the Papacy. As a claimant for the empire George was the leader of the anti-papal party, the upholder of a Council, the ally of Diether of Mainz. The failure of George's scheme weakened his position: he had abandoned his attitude as mediator in the disputes of Germany; he had thrown off the mask, and had shown himself to be opposed to Pope and Emperor; he had alienated somewhat his Bohemian subjects, who suspected that in these schemes of higher policy their national interests might be betrayed. Pius II. began to listen more heedfully to the reports that came from Breslau. He pressed for the embassy which was to declare at Rome the obedience of Bohemia, according to the promise which George, before his coronation, had made to the Pope. At length the embassy, which had been so long delayed, arrived in Rome on March 10, two days before the arrival of the French embassy

which was to announce the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction.

The coincidence seemed auspicious for the Papal success ; but Pius II. was soon driven to admit that Bohemia was different from France. The Bohemian embassy was headed by Procopius of Rabstein, a Catholic, an old friend of Pius II., who had been his colleague in the chancery of Frederick III., and Sdenek Kostka of Postupic, an Utraquist baron who stood high in the King's confidence ; with them was Wenzel Coranda, burgomaster of Prag. Pius II. adopted his usual plan of endeavouring to discover in a private interview the commission of the envoys, before he admitted them to a public audience.<sup>1</sup> On March 13 he summoned Procopius and Kostka, who said that they were sent to offer to the Pope the obedience of the Bohemian King 'as was customary and as his predecessors had offered it'. The Pope answered that the realm of Bohemia did not stand like other realms in the unity of the Church : the King had promised at his coronation to bring back his people from the error of their ways ; before his obedience could be accepted he must take oath to do so. The envoys answered that they could only do what they were commissioned to do. The question was referred to a committee of Cardinals, chief of whom were Carvajal, Cusa, and Bessarion. There were many conferences and a repetition of the arguments that had been used at Basel ; but the Bohemians remained firm to their position, that by accepting the Compacts they remained in the unity and obedience of the Church, and that they stood by the Compacts. On March 21 a public audience was given. Kostka, after making excuses for the delay of the embassy in appearing at Rome, professed the obedience of his King. 'You only offer the obedience of the King,' said the Pope, 'not of the kingdom.' Procopius whispered to

Bohemian  
envoys in  
Rome.  
March,  
1462.

<sup>1</sup> The account of this embassy is given in a relation of Wenzel Coranda, which has been followed by Palacky, *Geschichte von Böhmen*, iv., pt. 2, 215, etc.

Kostka, 'What shall we do? I will offer the obedience of my party, of which I am sure; do you the same on behalf of yours.' 'Speak in the name of all,' answered Kostka; 'what the King does all will accept.' Then Procopius repeated the declaration of obedience in the name of the King and the realm. 'If you have anything else to say,' said the Pope, 'say on.' Then Wenzel Coranda, with the loud voice and rapid speech which the Pope had so often heard from the Bohemians at Basel, set forth the origin of the Hussite movement, the troubles in Bohemia, the peace negotiations at Basel, and the Compacts; by holding fast to them King George had given peace to Bohemia; that peace was endangered by the open and secret attempts made in Bohemia and outside it, to do away with the Compacts; the Bohemians were called heretics and schismatics. He besought the Pope to free Bohemia from all suspicion, to give it peace and enable it to turn its energies against the Turks, by confirming the Compacts so that there should be no misunderstanding in the future. The Pope answered in a long speech which gave a history of Bohemia, showed how prosperous it had been while it remained Catholic, complained that the Compacts, which were a conditional indulgence granted by the Council of Basel, had been so violated in every way by the Bohemians, that they had ceased to be binding. Finally he declared that the demand made of him was impossible, for it was contrary to the unity of the Church; yet he would consult further with the Cardinals.

More conferences were held and more arguments were advanced on both sides. Carvajal pointed out the weakness of the Bohemian position. They declared that only the recognition of the Compacts could give Bohemia peace; yet peace was impossible so long as there were two different rituals. The aim of the Utraquists was the abolition of the Catholic ritual and the union of Bohemia under their own views. As the Compacts would never bring peace, he urged that it was better to drop

Pius II.  
annuls the  
Compacts.  
March 31,  
1462.

them. Kostka was not a disputant; but he was for that reason all the better fitted for his office. He answered that, if the King were to attempt anything against the Compacts, the Hussites would rise and a more bloody war than had been seen before would devastate Bohemia; he trusted that the Pope would listen to the request that had been made; if not, Bohemia must maintain itself in the future as it had done in the past. It was clear that nothing could come of controversy, and on March 31 the Pope gave his answer to the envoys: He spoke words of warning about the obedience which had been offered on the King's behalf: 'We praise the King, who seeks the door of the Lord, which is the Apostolic seat, to which are entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The King is wise in seeking the true door, the true pasture, the true shepherd; ourselves, though undeserving, he honours as the Vicar of Christ. In virtue of that obedience just offered we bid him remove all novelties from his kingdom; obedience is shown not in words but in deeds.'<sup>1</sup> Then the Pope turned to the request that he would confirm the Compacts. He repeated the familiar arguments used at Basel against the Communion under both kinds. The Compacts gave an indulgence in Bohemia and Moravia to those who united with the Church; they promised that the Council would give power to certain priests to administer the rite under both kinds to those who desired it in Bohemia. It did not appear that the Council had ever empowered any priest to do so, nor that Bohemia had returned to the unity of the Church. No argument in favour of their request could be founded on the Compacts themselves. If he was asked to grant them by his apostolic power, it would be impossible for him to grant what his predecessors had refused, what would scandalise Christendom, give offence to other nations and be harmful to themselves. 'As Christ said to the sons of Zebedee, so say I to you, "Ye know not what ye ask". We are the stewards of

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 93.

the mysteries of God ; it is for us to feed the sheep and guide the flock of the Lord in the way of safety. Not all understand what is for their good.'

When the Pope had ended, his Procurator-fiscal rose and read a public protestation, 'that our most holy Lord the Pope has extinguished and destroyed the Compacts granted by the Council of Basel to the Bohemians, and has said that the Communion under both kinds is nowise necessary to salvation, nor will he hold the obedience made to be real obedience, until the King, uprooting and extirpating all errors, has brought the kingdom of Bohemia to union with the Roman Church, and has conformed himself and his kingdom in all things and through all things to the Roman Church'.<sup>1</sup>

There was now no doubt of the Pope's meaning. Next day the Bohemian envoys took leave of the Pope, who received them in his garden and gave them his blessing. He bade them tell the King that he was willing to do all he could for Bohemia consistently with his honour and that of his office. Let the King himself communicate under one kind only, and the people would follow the example of a prince whom they loved. If he remained obstinate the Church would have to try other methods ; it was better to have the glory of restoring his land to the union of the Church than to suffer compulsion. The Bohemians asked that some one should accompany them to carry the Pope's instructions to the King. The Pope commissioned for this purpose Fantinus, a Dalmatian priest who had for two years acted as King George's proctor at Rome. He was a Catholic who had discharged his mission with good faith in the King's intentions. The Pope, who had been suspicious of him at first, was now secure of his integrity ; and the nomination of the King's own proctor seemed a conciliatory measure. On April 3 the Bohemians left Rome. Pius II. had taken a decided step,

<sup>1</sup> In Palacky, *Urkundliche Beiträge*, in *Fontes Rerum Austriacum*, vol. xx., p. 269.

Bohemian  
policy of  
Pius II.



and had forced George to declare himself. The Bohemian King had to consider whether he would face the difficulties of a breach with the Pope and with his Catholic subjects and neighbours, or whether he would abandon the Utraquists. Pius II. awaited his opportunity in either case.

From the troublesome task of receiving refractory embassies Pius II. turned gladly to the more congenial occupation of organising an impressive display of ecclesiastical ceremonial. A holy relic, the head of the Apostle S. Andrew, had been carried away from Patras by the despot Thomas Palæologus that it might be saved from the Turks ; and Pius II. offered it a secure refuge in Rome. It was received at Ancona by Cardinal Oliva and safely conveyed to Narni. Now that times were peaceable, Pius II. prepared for its reception at Rome. Three Cardinals were sent to bring it from Narni, and on Palm Sunday, April 11, carried their precious burden to Ponte Molle, where on the following day the Pope went out to meet it. The weather was wet and stormy, but Pius II. tells us with great satisfaction that the rain ceased during the time of the procession. A lofty stage was erected in the meadows by the Ponte Molle, large enough to contain all the clergy in Rome, and in the middle was an altar. The Pope and prelates advanced carrying palms in their hands. As the Pope mounted the platform on one side Bessarion and two Cardinals advanced on the other side bearing the reliquary. The Pope received it with reverence, placed it on the altar, and kneeling, with pale face and tremulous voice broken by tears, poured forth a prayer of welcome. The people who thronged around wept tears of devout joy, and when the Pope, rising, exposed the relic to their gaze, the 'Te Deum' burst from their lips. Then was sung a hymn in Sapphic verse specially composed by the Bishop of Ancona.<sup>1</sup> Then the Pope bore the relic to the city and

Reception  
of the  
head of S.  
Andrew in  
Rome.  
April 11,  
1462.

<sup>1</sup> It ended—

' Da Pio vitam, rogitamus omnes ;  
Solut in Turcos animo perenni

deposited it on the altar of S. Maria del Popolo, where he himself passed the night.

The ceremony of the next day seemed likely to be spoiled by the rain, which fell with violence during the night; but the prayers of the sightseers prevailed, and in the morning the sun shone again.<sup>1</sup> Still the streets were covered with mud, and the Cardinals expressed a desire to take part in the procession on horseback. The Pope would not allow the effect to be marred by this incongruity; he ordered all who could to walk; those who were too old or feeble might go to S. Peter's and there welcome the procession on its arrival. 'It was a great sight,' he tells us, 'full of devotion, to see old men going on foot through the slippery streets, carrying palms in their hands, with mitres on their hoary heads, their eyes fixed on the ground, intent on prayer: many nurtured in luxury, who could scarce endure to go a hundred yards on horseback, on that day easily accomplished two miles on foot, through the mud and wet, carrying the weight of their priestly attire.' The Pope's eye was keen to see how many of the more corpulent managed to carry the burden of their flesh. 'It was love,' he exclaims, 'that bore the weight; nothing is difficult to one who loves.' Pius II. was delighted with the devotional effect produced upon the people; he estimated that more than 30,000 wax candles were burned during the procession. The whole city was decorated, and boys dressed as angels sang hymns along the way. At last the Pope

Ausus Alpinos superare montes  
Arma vocavit;  
Et caput præbet proprium libenter,  
Nomen ut Christi veneretur orbis  
Et viam nostræ videat salutis  
Perfidus hostis.'

*Pii II. Commentarii*, 196.

<sup>1</sup> Pius II. tells us that the distich rushed into his mind:—

'Nocte pluit tota redeunt spectacula mane,  
Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet'.

Campanus adapted it to the requirements of piety:—

'Nocte pluit tota, redierunt tempora nostra;  
Nox fuit acta hostis, lux erit ista Dei'.

*Pii II. Comm.*, 197.

reached S. Peter's. Bessarion delivered an address, and Pius II. followed with a few words: he gave his benediction, and indulgences were announced in his name. So pleased was the Pope with the success of his festival, that he gave notice that on Easter Sunday he would celebrate mass in S. Peter's, and would again display the head of S. Andrew. It was four years since the Romans had seen a Pope say mass. So crippled was Pius II. with the gout that means had to be devised by which he might perform the office half-seated.

But ecclesiastical ceremonies could not satisfy the restlessness of the Pope. He longed for the delights of country life and for greater freedom; and on the pretext that his health required him to take baths, he set out in May for Viterbo. There he was carried into the fields in the fresh hours of early morning 'to catch the breeze and admire the green crops, and the flax in flower which imitated the hues of heaven, and filled beholders with delight'. In Viterbo also Pius II. resolved to try the effect of a splendid ecclesiastical ceremonial in celebration of Corpus Christi Day. He caused to be erected a tent adorned with splendid hangings and tapestries; from this tent to the cathedral each Cardinal undertook the decoration of a portion of the way. The Arras tapestries of the French Cardinals provoked great admiration. The Cardinal of S. Sisto contributed a representation of the Last Supper. Carvajal set forth a dragon surrounded by a herd of horrible demons; as the Pope passed by, S. Michael descended and cut off the dragon's head, and all the demons fell headlong, barking as they fell. Bessarion had a band of quiring angels. But Cardinal Borgia outdid all others in splendour. He erected a large tent covering the road with purple trappings; as the Pope approached, two angels advanced and knelt in reverence to the Host which the Pope carried; then turning towards the tent they sang, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and King Pius, Lord of the world, will come in'. Five kings and a band of armed men tried to prevent the

Ecclesiastical ceremonies in Viterbo. 1462.

entrance, crying out, 'Who is the King Pius?' 'The lord strong and mighty,' replied the angels; the curtain fell, the kings and their troops knelt before the Pope and sang songs in his honour, to the accompaniment of a band of musicians. A wild man of the woods led in chains a lion, and strove with him from time to time, as a symbol of the Pope's might. Next Cardinal Forteguerro showed his taste in the decoration of the chief piazza, which he roofed in with star-spangled cloth; on twelve columns sat twelve angels, who sang in alternate verses; in the middle of the piazza was a representation of the Holy Sepulchre, with the sleeping soldiers and the angels keeping watch around. An angel descended by a rope and sang in honour of the Resurrection. A gun was fired; the soldiers woke and rubbed their eyes; the tomb opened, one bearing the banner of the Resurrection stepped out, and in Italian verse announced to the crowd that their salvation had been won. In the piazza before the cathedral, Cardinal Milo had fitted up a representation of heaven; on the housetops were stars and angels and God in glory, while below was the tomb of the Virgin. Mass was said in the cathedral, and the Pope blessed the people. As he left the Church, the tomb of the Virgin opened, and a lady stepped out who was borne by angels to the housetops, dropping her girdle on the way. Then she was received into heaven amid the joy and songs of the angels.<sup>1</sup> The Pope was so satisfied with all he saw that day, that he says, 'Those who beheld these wonders thought that they had doubtless entered the realms above, and said that they had seen while alive in the flesh the presentation of their heavenly country'.

The restless spirit of Pius II. was not long content to remain at Viterbo. Taking occasion of an alarm of plague, he withdrew to Bolsena, and thence gradually made his way

<sup>1</sup> I give the realistic description in the words of the Pope himself: 'Cui occurrens Filius, idemque Pater et Dominus in fronte osculatus matrem, et oblatus æterno Patri, ad dexteram suam collocavit. Tum canere cælestium spirituum agmina.'—*Com.*, 210.

towards his native Corsignano, which had probably been his destination when he first left Rome. He wished to see the buildings with which he had adorned the little town. He strove still further to convert it into a memorial of himself by changing its name Corsignano into Pienza, and elevating it to the dignity of a bishopric. From Pienza Pius II. went to the baths of Petrioli and thence to Todi: he did not return to Rome till December 18.

Meanwhile success attended the Papal policy in Italy. On August 18, Ferrante of Naples won a decided victory over Piccinino and Jean of Anjou at Troja. The effect of his success was to shake the confidence of the Angevin barons and incline them to sue privately for peace. In September the powerful Prince of Taranto abandoned the cause of Jean; and in October a French embassy came to propose a truce to the Pope. Pius II. objected to include in it Gismondo Malatesta, an excommunicated heretic; and the negotiations were broken off. The Pope had no wish to make peace with Malatesta, who now seemed entirely in his hands. He had in the summer invaded the lands of the Pope's nephew, Antonio Piccolomini, but had been surprised by Federigo of Urbino, while attempting to withdraw from Sinigaglia which he had seized, and had been entirely defeated on August 12. His troops were scattered; his castles fell before Federigo; he was driven to seek the good offices of Venice to escape entire destruction. In October, 1463, he had to accept the Pope's terms. His proctors publicly abjured in his name the heresies with which he was charged, and the Pope freed him from the ban on condition that he fasted every Friday on bread and water. He was left only in possession of Rimini and the territory a few miles round. The power of the Malatesta was humbled, and Pius II. could plume himself on having won a signal success. But it was a small thing that a Pope who wished to hurl Europe against the Infidel should triumph in overthrowing, after four years of warfare, one Italian baron.

Humilia-  
tion of  
Gismondo  
Malatesta.  
October,  
1463.

Troubles in Germany. 1461-1462. In Germany Pius II. was not so successful. Since 1461 that unhappy country had been plunged in war and confusion. Frederick III. was attacked by his brother Albert of Austria, and peace was only made by the interposition of the Bohemian King. The opposing parties in the Empire had broken out into open war. On one side was the Pfalzgraf and Lewis of Bavaria, on the other Albert of Brandenburg and Charles of Baden, the Emperor's friends. With this the struggle about the Archbishopric of Mainz was naturally connected, and the claims of Diether were supported by the party opposed to the Emperor. On July 2, 1462, the Emperor's friends were entirely defeated. Frederick III. was afraid of an attack from his brother Albert, and was helpless; nor could the Pope do more than utter mild expostulations in behalf of peace.

George of Bohemia and the abolition of the Compacts. This state of affairs in Germany reacted speedily on Bohemia, where Pius II. had hoped by his resolute demeanour to strike terror into George, compel him to abandon the Compacts and reduce Bohemia to obedience to Rome. George was not in Prag on the arrival of the Pope's envoys. When he received from Fantinus the Pope's demands that he should publish through Bohemia the Papal sentence, should himself and his family receive the Communion under one kind only, and should dismiss all heretical priests, he did not give an immediate answer, but referred the matter to a Diet which was to meet in Prag on August 9. No doubt the part which the King then resolved to play was largely determined by the weakness of the Pope's friends in Germany.

Diet at Prag, August, 1462. The Diet met on August 12 in large numbers. Catholics and Utraquists alike were doubtful about the King's attitude; there was great uneasiness and great excitement. The King took his seat, with the Queen on his right hand, and briefly opened the proceedings. By their advice, he said, he had sent an embassy to Rome in confident expectation of securing thereby the peace



of the realm : what obstacles had hindered this result he knew not. He asked the envoys to give their own account of what had befallen them, that common counsel might be taken about the future. Procopius and Kostka gave a plain and truthful statement of the facts. Then George rose and said, ' We wonder what the Pope means : perhaps he wishes to plunge again into discord this kingdom which was united by the Compacts. How can he annul and take away what the Holy Council of Basel, which is more than he, and what his predecessor Eugenius, granted us ? If every Pope is to abolish what his predecessor granted, who will feel justice secure ? We are accused by the Pope of not fulfilling the oath made at our coronation. We will read the oath.' Then he read it in Bohemian, and continued : ' You hear that we swore to do away with all heresy from our realm. Assuredly we have no love for heretics. But to do as the Pope wishes and make the reception of the Communion under both kinds a heresy was never our intention ; for it is founded on Christ's gospels, and on the institution of the primitive Church, and, moreover, was granted to us by the Council of Basel as a privilege for our devotion and virtue. The Pope says we swore to put this away. By no means ; but know for certain that as we were born and bred in this Communion, and in it were raised to the royal dignity, we promise to uphold it and live and die in its defence. So too our queen, our children and all who wish to do us pleasure, will live as we do in this matter. Nor do we think that there is any other way for the salvation of our souls than to die in this faith, and use the Communion under both kinds according to the Saviour's institution.'

The King hoped to produce an impression by this unexpected firmness, and he succeeded. The majority of the Diet burst into tears. George determined to use his opportunity : he ordered the confirmations of the Compacts of Sigismund, Albert and Ladislas to be read, and finally the Compacts themselves. Then he arose : ' I ask you all

severally,' he said, 'if any one, whoever he be, wishes to defy and defame us and our kingdom on account of the Compacts, will you lend us your aid?' The Utraquists, after a brief conference, deputed Kostka to answer. 'Sire,' he said, 'we hear with pleasure that you, your queen, and your children, are with us in the faith, and we give you thanks without measure; we promise severally to aid you with our goods and with our persons in upholding the Compacts.' The King turned to the Catholics, who were in a minority in the Diet: 'Say openly what you will do'. The Bishops of Breslau and Olmütz were present amongst others. After a short conference amongst themselves, Sdenek of Sternberg answered: 'Sire, you know that hitherto we have had nothing to do with the Compacts; but as we were born and have lived in the union and obedience of the Roman Church, so we wish to live and die. As you say that you must hold to the faith in which you were born, we argue that we must equally hold to ours. As to your request for help, you never asked our counsel, as is customary; as you have decided to maintain the Compacts, you will have the help of those by whose counsel you made your decision. We promise to do all that is according to justice for your honour and that of the kingdom.' The King, who had apparently expected that the Catholics would have been impressed by the scene which they had witnessed, was dissatisfied with this answer, and pressed for something more explicit. It was, however, now late; and the Catholics demanded an adjournment, which the King at last granted, saying that next day they would hear Fantinus as the Pope's nuncio; 'as my proctor,' he added, 'I have some complaints against him'.

Fantinus was warned that the King was much displeased at him for his conduct as royal proctor at Rome; but he was resolved to discharge faithfully his mission from the Pope. When he appeared before the Diet he seemed to the Catholics 'like a lamb among wolves'; and it was noticed that he had no special

George of  
Bohemia  
breaks  
with the  
Pope.

place assigned to him, but stood among the rest. He spoke in Latin, and his words were translated into Bohemian by an interpreter. He began by demanding the rights of an ambassador to speak freely according to the law of nations. When this was granted, he proceeded to attack the Compacts, denounced as heretical the Communion under both kinds, asserted the Papal power and defended the Pope's action in annulling the Compacts. He insisted that the interpretation of George's oath was a matter for the superior, not the inferior; for him who received, not for him who gave the promise; for the Pope, not for the King. George angrily interrupted him. 'In all and everything we have kept our oath as our conscience teaches us. If the Pope or any one wished us to interpret it against our conscience we would give him full satisfaction and support ourselves as best we could. We doubt not that we keep our oath as truly as the Pope or any one else.' Fantinus resumed his speech undaunted. He went on to say that, if he had believed that the King wished to act as protector of the Compacts and of the Communion under both kinds, he would never have acted as his proctor; he publicly renounced that office, and in the Pope's name declared the suspension from the priesthood of all clergy who upheld the Compacts; he warned the King that he ran great risks in opposing the Pope's will. The King briefly said: 'My lords, you have elected me your King and protector; you have the power of electing a lord, and you must stand by him'. In private his anger blazed forth; he bitterly complained of the indignities which Fantinus and the Pope heaped on him, and declared that he would be avenged. 'You know,' he added, 'that on the Apostolic seat have sat many renegades and wicked men; it is not the seat of holiness, but of pestilence. The holy seat is the union of all faithful people, and that is not Rome.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The account of this Diet, given by Pius II., *Comment.*, 237, has clearly been elaborated from the two reports given by Palacky, *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte Georg's von Podiebrad*, p. 272, etc.

If King George had hoped by his sudden display of firmness to kindle the enthusiasm of the Hussites, so that it should carry away the Catholics or fill them with terror, the boldness of Fantinus upset his plans. The grandeur of the King on the first day was overshadowed by the determined bravery of Fantinus on the second. The Catholic party at once plucked up courage and prepared for the contest, which began next day, when the King ordered Fantinus to be imprisoned for treacherous dealings as royal proctor, and also deprived Procopius of Rabstein of his office as Chancellor. The Bishops of Breslau and Olmütz at once fled from Prag, and it was clear that George's hopes of a peaceable settlement of Bohemia had failed. Fantinus was kept in prison for a short time, and Pius II. tells us that George visited him and said, 'I can scarce restrain myself from strangling you with my own hands'. 'I expected a common executioner,' said Fantinus, 'but if a king puts his hands to the work I shall die more honourably; but you will grudge me the glory.' The mediation of Lewis of Bavaria persuaded George at length that it was unwise to imprison the Papal nuncio. In October Fantinus was released and returned to Rome, where Pius II. rewarded his services with a bishopric.<sup>1</sup>

If George had not succeeded in winning all the nobles to his side, he hoped that he might be more fortunate with the clergy. He ordered the administrator of the Archbishopric of Prag to summon all the clergy to an assembly on September 16, to hear what he intended for the good of peace. There came 714 clergy, of whom about 200 were Catholics. The Catholics assembled by themselves, and agreed who was to be their spokesman and what he should answer. Then they formed in procession, three abreast, and advanced to the royal presence, where the Utraquists under Rokycana were already assembled. The King spoke: 'We always seek the peace of our

Dealings  
of George  
with the  
Bohemian  
clergy.

<sup>1</sup> Pii II. *Comment.*, 241.

kingdom; but you priests quarrel amongst yourselves, accuse one another of heresy, refuse sepulture to the dead, exclude the living from the Churches; you pollute your priesthood by consorting with light women, play at dice, and commit many other disorders. Unless you change your manners we will proceed against you, as you have no spiritual judge. We bid you, however, observe faithfully the Compacts granted for the peace of the realm by the Council of Basel to our predecessors. If any one does otherwise he will provoke our anger.' The Catholics listened in silence: after a short deliberation they made answer: 'We thank your Majesty for the peace which we enjoy, and pray that it may long continue. We do not deny that ill deeds are done by the clergy; in such a multitude there must be some who are evil. Yet we do not know who they are: if you would point them out they should be punished, for we still have authority among ourselves. As to the Compacts, we answer as did your nobles. We never wanted them; we do not want them; the Roman See never granted them, but the Council of Basel gave them as an indulgence. Whether or no those to whom the indulgence was given use it as it was granted, God must judge. The peace which you say the Compacts have brought we gladly accept: that they bring any aid in gaining our salvation we do not see. We feel sure that your Majesty will not hinder the Church of Prag in her ceremonies, and will not impose on us any other ritual than that handed down to our ancestors by the Apostolic See—which is the gate of heaven.'

King George angrily declared that he was no heretic: he had never resisted the Apostolic See, but he would not abandon the Communion under both kinds: he must obey God rather than the Pope. He produced an intercepted letter from a Catholic priest, in which he was denounced as a heretic: he bitterly complained of such conduct. Next day the assembly met again; but George did not succeed in obtaining from the Catholic clergy more than he had obtained

from the Catholic nobles. Yet he still strove to keep his position as a mediator. Rokycana brought before him a complaint against one of the clergy. 'You wish that every one should obey you,' was the King's answer, 'while you obey no one.' The assembly was dismissed in peace. George did not attempt to interfere with the Catholic services. In spite of the breach with the Papacy, men said that the peace of Bohemia had never been more secure.<sup>1</sup> Pius II. was ready to proceed to extremities: on October 8 he issued a letter to the men of Breslau, releasing them from their allegiance to George, 'as he had not returned to the bosom of the Church, but held in his kingdom doctrines that had been condemned'. The Pope was ready to plunge Bohemia into another civil war; George trusted that events might still be too powerful for Pius II., and might drive him to leave the Bohemian question alone, if not formally to ratify the Compacts.

The Bohemian King was soon able to claim the mediation of the Emperor. Austria was a prey to plundering bands of soldiers, whom Frederick III. was helpless to repress. The people of Vienna rose in rebellion against their incompetent prince. They solemnly defied him on October 5, called in his brother Albert, and besieged Frederick in the citadel. George of Bohemia went to the Emperor's aid. 'As an Elector of the Empire,' he said, 'he felt himself bound to support his lord.' By his means peace was made between the two brothers. Albert was to govern Austria for eight years, and Frederick was to be allowed to depart in safety. He left Vienna ignominiously and withdrew to Neustadt; but it was understood that he was to repay his Bohemian ally by interceding on his behalf with the Pope. Though Pius II. was determined to continue his policy of opposition to the Compacts in Bohemia, he judged it wise to hold his hand for a time. He could not

Position of  
George as  
regards  
Germany.

<sup>1</sup> Palacky, *Urkundliche Beiträge*, 281. *Zeitungen aus Prag*, October 5: 'Die Slesier . . . habin vorstanden, das sie in besserm fride nye gewesin sein denn itzunder'.



attack the King who held in his hands the peace of Germany.

Other struggles and other heresies claimed the Pope's attention. It was as difficult to keep the peace between the monastic orders as between the Catholics and Utraquists in Bohemia. Contests as fierce raged within the bosom of the Church as those which distracted it from without; and the heresies of Bohemia were not the only ones which the Pope was called upon to decide. The reaction that produced the Papal restoration intensified also a movement within the Franciscan Order for the revival of the old rule of S. Francis in all its pristine simplicity. The Minorites of the Observance, as they called themselves, denounced as renegades their brethren who were content to dwell in settled abodes and hold the property which the piety of their predecessors had won. The strife waxed bitter between the Observantists and Conventuals; and each party strove to gain the favour of the Pope. Eugenius IV., whose highest ideal was a monastic reformation, naturally favoured the Observantists, and hoped to make of them a bulwark of the Papal power. He gave them the privilege of electing a Vicar of their own, exempt from the authority of the General of the Order, and conferred on them other favours, which put them in a position of superiority over the Conventuals. Nicolas V. had no interest in these disputes, and to promote peace withdrew some of the special favours which had most irritated the Conventuals. This brought upon him the remonstrances—even the wrath—of the great leader of the Observantists, Fra Giovanni Capistrano; but Nicolas V. was not the man to be moved from his determination by clamour. It was now the turn of the Conventuals to act on the aggressive. They demanded that the Observantists should either renounce their separate Vicar, or should leave the Franciscan Order altogether, and call themselves 'Brethren of the Bull,' or 'The Privileged'. Calixtus III. in vain strove to make peace. Peace was impossible; but

Dis-  
sen-  
sions  
within the  
Francis-  
can Order.

as Calixtus saw that the Observantists were useful for his purpose by preaching a crusade and gathering Turkish tithes, he resolved to support them. Yet his Bull wore the appearance of a compromise. All Franciscans were to obey the General of the Order, and the Vicars of the Observantists were to attend the chapters; they were to submit to the General three names, from whom he should choose one to be Chief Vicar of the Observantists; this Vicar was to have over the Observantists all the authority of the General.<sup>1</sup> The compromise only awoke new questions about the right of the Observantists to vote at the election of a General, to whom they did not owe obedience. Pius II. revoked the Bull of Calixtus III., and restored that of Eugenius IV. The alternations of the Papal policy were admirably adapted to keep alive the spirit of rivalry which they professed to heal.

Under Pius II. the conflict entered upon a new stage. Pius II. favoured the Observantists, because he needed them for his crusading projects; and they no doubt thought that the opportunity was favourable for gaining still higher privileges for themselves. One of their oldest and most respected members, Fra Giacomo della Marca, took occasion, in preaching at Brescia on Easter Sunday, 1462, to assert that 'the Blood of Christ shed on the ground during the Passion was not an object of worship, since it was separated from the Divine Person'. It was an old question of dispute whether the Blood of Christ so shed had lost or not 'the hypostatic union of the Logos'. By raising the question at Brescia, the seat of the Dominican Inquisitor, Fra Giacomo threw down the gauntlet, and showed his wish to provoke a trial of strength. The Inquisitor accepted the challenge, condemned the opinion as heretical, and ordered Fra Giacomo to recant. But Giacomo appeared in the pulpit, and after recounting his long services to the Church during his career

Dispute  
about the  
worship  
due to the  
Blood of  
Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vi., 304.

of forty years as a preacher, proceeded to confirm his opinion by citing authorities. This was the beginning of a furious strife; the people were divided between the two parties, and the hatred of rival theologians was let loose in all its fanaticism. The Bishop of Brescia in vain interposed. The matter was referred to the Pope, who proclaimed a truce, and summoned both sides to a disputation at Rome. Three eminent theologians appeared for either party; and the dispute began before the Pope and Cardinals on Christmas Day, 1462. For three whole days they argued, the Dominicans maintaining that the Blood of Christ, inasmuch as it returned to His body, never lost the hypostatic union: while the Minorites asserted that during the three days of the Passion this union ceased. Pius II. has preserved in his 'Commentaries' <sup>1</sup> a long record of the arguments; but he felt little real interest in the matter, and regarded the disputants with amusement. To him theological disputation seemed a form of athletic exercise, not merely mentally but physically. 'It was a pleasant and agreeable thing,' he says, 'to hear the fine intellects of learned men contend with one another, and to see now one, now another, shoot ahead. They strove, as was fitting before the Pope's majesty, with modesty and fear; but so sharp was the contest that, though it was the middle of winter and the world was stiff with frost, the disputants were bathed with sweat; such was their zeal for victory.' When all had been heard, the Pope conferred with the Cardinals for several days. The majority were on the side of the Dominicans; and Pius II. agreed with the majority. But he determined not to publish his decision, lest the crowd of Minorites, whose help was necessary in preaching against the Turks, should be offended. He contented himself with accepting from the Dominicans, and entering in the Papal archives, a copy of a decision in their favour on this subject given by Pope Clement VI. in 1351. The Friars were contented not to have their doctrine

<sup>1</sup> Pages 279-292.

condemned ; and this momentous discussion was allowed to rest for a few years in peace.

Pius II. had now established the custom of taking excursions for pleasure from Rome, and in May, 1463, accepted an invitation from Cardinal Estouteville to pay him a visit at Ostia. Pius II. went, as a modern traveller would do, to inspect the antiquities and enjoy the natural beauties of the place. His enjoyment was slightly marred by a terrible storm of wind and rain, which rose suddenly in the night and wrought considerable havoc. As the Bishop's palace was not large enough to accommodate all the Cardinals and their attendants who had accompanied the Pope, many of them were sleeping in tents. The tents were blown away, and the occupants, in their attempts to gain shelter in the darkness of the night, suffered many misadventures. Even in the palace the Pope was afraid that the roof might fall, and was being wrapped up that he might sit outside in the rain rather than run the risk indoors, when the wind ceased, 'as though fearing to incommode the Pope,' Pius complacently observes.<sup>1</sup>

After his return from Ostia Pius II. did not stay long in Rome. He again set out for an excursion to Albano ; thence he went to Castle Gandolfo, rejoicing in the beauties of the Alban Lake ; and finally to Rocca di Papa. As he journeyed along the Appian Road he was grieved to see the tombs being used as quarries for neighbouring buildings, and gave orders that they should be taken under the protection of the Pope. He returned to Rome for Whit Sunday, but at the end of June, complaining of the heat, departed to Tivoli, where he remained till the middle of September.

The summer of 1463 saw the end of several of the Pope's little contests. It was decisive for the Neapolitan war, which, since the battle of Troja, had lingered on while the Angevin barons were avowedly seeking to find what were the best terms they could make for themselves. Jean of

<sup>1</sup> *Comment.*, p. 304.

Anjou discovered that he had been from the beginning the tool of the Neapolitan barons, headed by the Prince of Taranto. When the Prince of Taranto found that he was no longer profitable, he did not scruple to abandon his cause. The condottiere Piccinino was Jean's only support, and Piccinino was also preparing to desert him. In August, 1463, Alessandro Sforza offered battle to Piccinino, which Piccinino did not find it convenient to accept. He came instead into Sforza's camp to talk matters over. His arguments, as given by Pius II., are extremely characteristic of the general condition of Italian politics. 'Why,' said he, 'do you wish to conquer me? It is I who bring you glory, riches, pleasure—all that you enjoy. Because I took up arms and overthrew the peace of Italy, you, who were lying idle at home, were called to the field. Will you do any good by taking me prisoner? Who wants peace? No one, save priests and merchants, the Roman Curia, and the traders of Venice and Florence. Peace in Italy brings them all they want, and leaves us nothing to scrape together. In peace we are despised, and sent to the plough; in war we become mighty, and may follow the example of Francesco Sforza, who has raised himself to a dukedom. Our policy is to refuse to conquer, and prolong the war, the end of which is the end of our gains.' Many of the captains agreed with Piccinino; but Alessandro Sforza answered: 'Do not fear. Italy will never be free from war till she is under one rule, and that is a far distant prospect. Let us finish this war and betake ourselves to a greater. You need not boast, Piccinino, as if you only kept war on foot. Had not the Pope and the Duke of Milan sent us against you, you would have finished this war long ago in favour of the French, an unworthy undertaking for an Italian, for one who had borne arms for Aragon and for the Church.' Piccinino replied: 'I was driven to fight for the French because no one else wanted me. Bred in arms, I could not leave the field. I would rather have declared war against my own father than have

Piccinino  
deserts the  
Angevin  
cause in  
Naples.  
August,  
1463.

disbanded my troops. I served the French because they gave me pay. Now I am free, and willing to negotiate with you if you will give me worthy terms.' It was agreed that Piccinino should be made Ferrante's commander-in-chief, with a salary of 90,000 ducats, and should keep his conquests in the Abruzzi. Ferrante and Pius II. in vain protested against these terms; the military leaders were agreed, and all others had to submit.<sup>1</sup> Piccinino changed sides, and Jean of Anjou retired to Ischia, awaiting ships and men from France, which never came. In April, 1464, he left Ischia and returned to France. Ferrante was now undisputed master of Naples; but he had learned how little confidence he could place in his barons, and waited quietly his opportunity to reduce their power. To the very last Pius II. kept his hold on Naples, and tried still further to enrich his nephews. The county of Celano, whose young Count had joined the Angevin party, was overrun by the Pope's troops in the name of the Church; Pius II. succeeded in handing it over to Antonio Piccolomini. The Neapolitan policy of Pius II., no doubt, was sound as regarded Italian affairs: the success of Ferrante secured the peace of Italy so long as he lived. But the part which the Pope played had been a perpetual hindrance to his good understanding with France, and its most immediate result had been to make a good provision for two of the Pope's nephews.

This turn of affairs in Naples filled up the measure of the French King's wrath against the Pope. He had abolished the Pragmatic Sanction partly out of caprice, partly with an expectation of receiving an adequate reward. He was now conscious that he had acted contrary to his own interests, and that he had been beguiled by the Pope. He wrote to Pius II. a letter, 'unworthy of his dignity,' as Pius II. plaintively remarks, 'and as though he were the Pope's superior, condemned his doings and gave him rules of life'.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately we have

Anger of  
Louis XI.  
at the  
Pope's  
Neapoli-  
tan policy.

<sup>1</sup> The account of this is given by Pius II., *Comment.*, 319-21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 323.



only the Pope's account of the contents of this letter : but that describes them as sufficiently severe. The Pope's policy was submitted to a damaging criticism : he had disturbed Naples, had ruined the Church of Mainz, had excommunicated the Pfalzgraf and Sigismund of Austria, had accused the Bohemian King of heresy—in short, would allow no one to live in peace ; it would be much better if he would turn his attention to the Turks. At the same time Louis XI. wrote also to the Cardinals asking if they could inform him what the Pope's intentions really were. Pius II. has not told us what the French party said in the consistory when these letters were laid before them ; but he felt that he was put on his trial before the College, and found it necessary to justify himself. The Cardinals affected to wonder at the tone of the letters and to doubt that they were really what the King had intended. Pius II. did not answer in writing, but proposed that he should send one envoy and the Cardinals another, with instructions to excuse the Pope, to appease the King, and urge on him, as the supreme remedy for all differences of opinion, that he should wage war against the Turk.<sup>1</sup>

The envoys were, however, unable either to stem the torrent of the royal displeasure or to gain from France any help for the crusade. Louis XI. showed that he did not intend to leave the Pope much room for interference in France. A strife had been for some time raging between the Bishop of Nantes and the Duke of Brittany, in which the Bishop had called on the Pope for aid. Louis XI. suddenly interfered in the matter, declared that Duke and Bishop were alike vassals of the crown of France, took prisoner the Pope's legate who was on his way to Brittany, and deprived him of his letters on the ground that in a dispute concerning a fief of the French crown he and not the Pope was the judge. Pius II. calls this ' a tyrannical and lying statement ' ;<sup>2</sup> it was indeed an

Anti-Papal measures of Louis XI.

<sup>1</sup> *Comm.*, 343.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

assertion of feudal rights for which Duke and Bishop were as little prepared as was the Pope. Not content with this, Louis XI. deprived Cardinal Alain of Avignon of his temporalities for having advised the sending of the nuncio; he treated similarly two bishops, nephews of Alain, and even threatened Cardinal Estouteville. In vain the Pope expostulated. 'Who,' he bitterly exclaims, 'could persuade a king who takes his greed for law and listens only to those who tickle his ears?'

As soon as it was seen that Louis XI. was willing to oppose the Pope the Gallican party at once revived. The Parlement and the University laid their grievances before the King, and the clergy who had felt the weight of the exactions of the Curia were ready to accept relief at the King's hands. A series of royal ordinances were issued which took back almost all that had been granted to the Papacy by the abolition of the Pragmatic. 'The King,' says Pius II. sadly, 'did not show himself so religious by the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction as he showed himself sacrilegious by issuing such decrees.'<sup>1</sup> The first of these ordinances, dated February 17, 1463, set aside a Constitution of the Pope which took into the Papal Camera the goods of deceased prelates, together with half the benefices which they held in commendam. When the Papal officials tried to avoid this edict by threats of excommunication against those who refused to pay, a second edict was issued in June, 1464, forbidding all such exactions and punishing by confiscation of goods and banishment from the kingdom all collectors who strove to levy them.<sup>2</sup> Another edict (May, 1463) maintained the royal right of disposing of benefices during vacancies, as against those who came provided with Papal reservations and the like.<sup>3</sup> All cases concerning such matters were declared to be under the

Royal  
ordi-  
nances re-  
store the  
provisions  
of the  
Pragmatic  
Sanction.  
1463-1464.

<sup>1</sup> *Comment.*, 324.

<sup>2</sup> The edicts are given in *Preuves des Libertés*, 467-70.

<sup>3</sup> 'Ordonnance' in *Preuves*, 300.

cognisance of the Parlement ; in case of Papal censures being directed against this ordinance the Proctor-General was ordered to appeal to a future Council.<sup>1</sup> In June, 1464, another ordinance declared the sole right of the royal courts to determine causes concerning the claims of the crown ; those who appealed to the Curia against them were banished from the kingdom ; ecclesiastics who aided in such appeals were declared incapable of holding benefices in France.<sup>2</sup> To protect the Parlement against Papal interference it was declared that its officials were responsible to no court outside the boundaries of Paris. When Pius II. regarded all these edicts he might well feel that if he had deluded Louis XI. into the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction by false hopes, Louis XI. showed himself capable of retaliating. The extinction of the Pragmatic proved illusory in its turn, and the place of the legislation which had been abolished was rapidly filled up by a new series of laws still more markedly anti-papal in their spirit.

Germany in 1463 seemed tending towards peace. After the rescue of Frederick by George of Bohemia, Adolf of Nassau had surprised Mainz by night, had driven out Diether and his adherents, set parts of the town in flames, and ruined for his own quarrel the prosperity of his cathedral city. It was a happy stroke and did much to restore the balance of parties in Germany. Negotiation was again possible ; the Pfalzgraf became reconciled with Albert of Brandenburg Diether, after many conferences, agreed to renounce the Archbishopric of Mainz in return for a portion of its lands, over which he was to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction ; Adolf succeeded to the title, the debts and the ruins of the greatest see in Germany. The death of Albert of Austria in December, 1463, paved the way also for a reconciliation between Frederick and Sigismund of the Tyrol, who renounced his claims in Austria, on the understanding that Frederick was

Gradual  
pacifica-  
tion of  
Germany.  
1464.

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Parlement, *Preuves*, 705.

<sup>2</sup> *Preuves*, 703.

to reconcile him with the Pope. Pius II. and Cusa were weary of their long struggle; Sigismund made submission and was absolved in the beginning of 1464. The Pope might claim that he had vindicated the dignity of the Papacy; but assuredly he had lost more than he had gained in the long duel with Heimburg. Before the final agreement about the disputes concerning Brixen was made, Pius II. and Cusa were both dead, and Heimburg had sought a refuge in the Court of the Bohemian King.

Pius II. was a skilful diplomat, and no doubt expected great results from the energy which he had displayed on so many sides. Yet, after all, the general aspect of affairs remained much the same as it had been at the end of the Congress of Mantua. France was still hostile to the Papacy; Bohemia was still unsubdued. It is true that Naples had been won for Ferrante, Gismondo Malatesta had been overthrown, Pienza had been beautified, and the Pope's nephews had been well provided for. On the other hand, Mainz had been well nigh ruined, Heimburg had dealt many crushing blows at the Pope's prestige, the Papacy had become more closely involved in the party struggles of Germany, and the German opposition had become more purely political.

## CHAPTER IX.

## CRUSADE AND DEATH OF PIUS II.

1464.

SINCE the end of the Congress of Mantua little has been heard about the war against the Turks ; yet we should wrong Pius II. if we did not admit the sincerity of his desire for a crusade. But he had not the fanaticism of Calixtus III. to drive him to do something, however inadequate it might be, nor had he the resoluteness of a great statesman to pursue constantly one supreme end. His early training had made him ready to catch at advantages as they offered themselves. He did not try to mould European affairs into accordance with his own plans ; but he strove to make the Papal power prevail along the whole line of its pretensions, and trusted in the long run to have his way. While animated by a desire for the general interests of Christendom, he could not rise above the particular interests of the Papacy. He failed to impress his contemporaries with his sincerity ; even had he done so, he seems to have felt it doubtful whether he could win them to united action.

Attitude  
of Pius II.  
towards  
the cru-  
sade.

Pius II. must have felt that the action of his predecessors had not been such as to inspire Europe with much confidence. Nicolas V. had gathered Turkish tithes, which he had spent on the adornment of Rome. Calixtus III. had squandered his treasure in insignificant expeditions, which showed no sense of the work in which he was engaged. Pius II. might have expected that his

Opinion  
of Europe.

protestations at Mantua would be subjected to the calm criticism of observers. His leisurely and magnificent progress to the Congress seemed a needless waste of money : his share in the Neapolitan war was opposed to his expressed desire for universal peace. Italy hesitated to grant him the supplies which he demanded. Europe saw in the Congress of Mantua a series of negotiations on matters which concerned the Papal interests. When Pius sojourned at ease in his beloved Siena, men said that the whole matter was merely an excuse to enable the Pope to leave Rome and enjoy a visit to his native place. Few thought that the Pope was in earnest, or that his future action would go beyond eloquent protestations from time to time.

We have seen enough of the Pope's activity to feel that there was some justification for those who judged that he had not the cause of a crusade so deeply at heart as to forego for its sake any advantage to himself. He did not even interfere decidedly in such matters as might have furthered it. Hungary had long been the bulwark of Christendom against the Turk, and bravely had John Hunyadi defended it. On John's death the Hungarian nobles took as their king his young son Matthias Corvinus, in the hopes that they would find him a powerless ruler under whom they might pursue their own interests. When the young Matthias displayed the same resolute disposition as his father, they began to pay more heed to the claims on Hungary of the Emperor Frederick, whom in February, 1459, the discontented party solemnly elected as their king. Here was a matter which clearly demanded the Pope's intervention as a mediator. The internal peace of Hungary was of vital importance to Christendom, was of prime necessity if the Turk was to be held at bay. But Pius II. saw the political difficulties in the way of quarrelling with the Emperor ; the interests of Christendom could not outweigh in his mind the advantages to be gained by the Curia through its Imperial ally. Pius II. could not bring himself to act with decision : he received

Pius II.  
and Hun-  
gary.  
1459-63.



the obedience of Matthias and called him king on the principle, which he wished to be allowed to apply to Naples, of recognising things as they were. Beyond this he assumed an attitude of impartial neutrality, and kindly offered to judge the rival claims if they were submitted to his decision. Whatever other steps might be taken with advantage, there could be no doubt of the need of supplying Matthias with money to enable him to war against the Turks. Pius II. had much good advice to give and many expressions of sympathy; but all the urgency of Carvajal, who was legate in Hungary, could not obtain supplies that were of any purpose.

Still Pius II. had undertaken the cause of the crusade, and however much he might pursue more immediate objects, he did not entirely forget it. Some of the things that befell him as advocate for the Christian cause are ludicrous enough. A Franciscan Friar, Ludovico of Bologna, had gone to the East in the days of Calixtus III. and brought back reports of Christians in Persia who were ready to submit to the Pope, and join an alliance against the Sultan. Soon after the return of Pius II. to Rome from the Congress of Mantua, Fra Ludovico appeared, bringing with him envoys from potentates of the East, the Emperor of Trapezus, the King of Persia, the King of Mesopotamia, the Duke of Greater Iberia, and the Lord of Armenia Minor. They had come through Scythia over the Don and the Danube, through Hungary to Germany, where they had been welcomed by the Emperor; thence they had passed through Venice to Rome. They were received with honour as royal ambassadors, and had quarters and food assigned to them—which was indeed necessary, as some could eat as much as twenty pounds of meat a day. When admitted to an audience they set forth, through Fra Ludovico as interpreter, that their kings had heard from him of the Congress of Mantua, and were willing to attack the Turks in Asia, while the Christians attacked them in Europe: for this purpose they

Impos-  
torous  
embassy  
from the  
East. 1461.

would raise an army of 120,000 men ; they begged the Pope to make Ludovico Patriarch of the Eastern Christians. The Pope assented to their request, and offered to pay the expenses of their journey to the Courts of France and Burgundy, on whose co-operation the proceedings in Europe mainly depended. They were coldly listened to in France and Burgundy ; but no doubt they passed the time pleasantly. Meanwhile the Pope began to suspect Fra Ludovico, and on his return to Rome threatened to imprison him for having styled himself Patriarch on his travels, without having received consecration. He was, however, allowed to depart for his companions' sake. At Venice he prevailed on some unwary bishops to ordain him priest and patriarch. When Pius II. heard this, he wrote to the Patriarch of Venice to imprison the impostor ; but Ludovico was warned by the Doge, and made his escape. It was a cruel imposture, and was by no means the only one of which the Pope had to complain.<sup>1</sup>

Still more extraordinary than this pretended embassy is the fact that Pius II. actually attempted to convert the Sultan by his eloquence. As rhetoric was the only contribution to a crusade which the Pope saw his way towards making, he seems to have resolved to try its effects to the uttermost. It is a strong testimony to the tolerant spirit of the Turks that stories were rife of the Sultan's willingness to listen to Christian teaching. It is no less characteristic of the temper of the early Renaissance that Pius II. should have thought that all subjects admitted of reasonable discussion. He wrote a long letter to the Sultan pointing out the advantages that would follow from his acceptance of Christianity. Already the spread of the Turkish arms had led Cardinal Cusa to write an elaborate examination of the Koran, from which Pius II. borrowed

Letter of  
Pius II.  
to the  
Sultan.

<sup>1</sup> Pius II. tells us about this embassy in *Comm.*, 127. Cornelius Zantfliet, *Chronicum*, in Martene and Durand, *Amp. Coll.*, v., 502, gives an account of it in Germany, and Du Clercq, bk. iv., ch. xxvii., in Burgundy.

many of his theological arguments. His letter dwelt first upon the horrors of war, and his desire to avert them; he does not hate the Sultan, though his foe, but rather wishes him well. The conquest of Europe is not like that of Asia; it is impossible to the Turkish forces; yet Mahomet may obtain all the glory that he wishes without bloodshed by means simply of the little water needed for baptism. If he accepted that the Pope would recognise him as Emperor of Asia and of Greece; what he now possessed by violence would become lawfully his: by this means, and by this only, might the golden age be brought back to the world. The Sultan might object that the Turks would refuse to follow him if he abandoned his religion. The Pope reassured him by the examples of Clovis and Constantine. How great is the glory that he might so attain! All literature, Latin, Greek, and Barbarian alike, would extol his name. More than this, he would gain the heavenly promise, and would be able to add to the virtues of a philosopher the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, without which no man can be perfect. The Pope then unfolded to him the Christian scheme, and discussed the points in which it differs from the Koran; he expatiated on the superiority of the law of Christ over that of Mahomet, and again exhorted the Sultan to consult his own interests, both here and hereafter, by accepting Christian baptism.<sup>1</sup>

The letter forms a bulky pamphlet, and is written with great spirit and clearness: it abounds in historical allusions and quotations from classical poets and philosophers. It is to be regretted that we have no answer from the Sultan, nor do we read that any was returned. Still the Pope's letter was widely read in Europe, and produced a great effect on the imagination of Christendom. From this time forward forgeries of a similar correspondence formed part of the vast store of literature which gathered round the Turkish war.

<sup>1</sup> In Raynaldus, 1461, 44, etc. *Pii II. Epistolæ* (ed. Basel), No. 396. There is no date given to this letter, but perhaps it may be assigned to the end of 1461.

The Papal  
plan of a  
crusade.  
March,  
1462.

While Europe was engaged in quarrelling, and the Pope was busy writing, the Turks pursued their conquests. The Morea fell into their hands, as did Rhodes, Cyprus, Lesbos, and the chief islands of the Ægean ; Scanderbeg, in Albania, was driven to make peace, and Bosnia fell before the Turks' arms. Pius II. was stirred to action, and in March, 1462, he summoned six Cardinals to a private meeting, and to them unfolded his schemes. ' You think, perhaps, my brothers,' he said, ' as all the world does, that we think nought of the general interest, because since our departure from Mantua we have made no preparations, and uttered no words about the crusade, though day by day the foe presses nearer. We have, indeed, been silent, and have done nothing ; but it was through lack of power, not through lack of will. We have often thought what could be done for Christendom. We have passed many sleepless nights, tossing from side to side, and were ashamed of our inaction. Our bosom swelled, our old blood boiled. To proclaim war by ourselves is useless, for the Holy See cannot, with its own resources, wage a war against the Turk ; we need the help of the princes of Christendom. We considered all possible means to obtain this, but none seemed fitting. If we think of a congress, the experience of Mantua shows that it is vain. If we send legates, they are mocked. If we impose tithes on the clergy, an appeal is made to a future Council. If we promulgate indulgences, we are accused of avarice ; every one thinks that it is done to scrape up money ; no one believes our words. Like bankrupt merchants, we have lost all credit. Whatever we do is construed for the worse ; every one measures our character by his own. We turn our mind's eye everywhere, and find nothing firm. Meditating day and night, we have hit upon one remedy, perhaps the only one, certainly the most efficacious.' Then the Pope went on to unfold his scheme. Philip of Burgundy had vowed to go on the crusade if some other prince did so ; he was bound by a solemn oath, which he would

not venture to set aside. Old as he was, the Pope would offer to set out himself; Philip could not refuse to accompany one who was both Pope and King,—one who was greater than King or Emperor. If Burgundy set out, France would, for very shame, send some forces, and so would the other powers of Europe. It was, however, useless to propose this till Venice would provide a fleet. Venice must first be sounded, then France and Burgundy. When they agreed the Pope would proclaim a European truce for five years, call on the clergy for subsidies, under pain of excommunication, and by indulgences raise money from the laity. ‘The noise of our plan,’ he added, ‘will come like a crash of thunder, and rouse the minds of the faithful to the defence of their religion.’<sup>1</sup>

The Cardinals heard the Pope’s plan with amazement, and asked for some days to deliberate. All the difficulties that they could raise were foreseen and answered by the Pope. They at length pronounced the scheme worthy of the Vicar of Christ, and Pius II. wrote at once to the Doge of Venice binding him to secrecy for the present. The Bishop of Ferrara was at the same time sent to Louis XI. of France. But Louis was not on such terms with the Pope as to look on his proposals with a friendly eye. He regarded them as a blind to draw his attention from the affairs of Naples; and the only answer that he would vouchsafe was, that he purposed sending an envoy to the Pope who would treat about Naples and the crusade together. Meanwhile, he added, he had on hand the business of restoring to his throne Henry VI. of England, which he hoped to do within a year. ‘I will give you four years more for that,’ said the legate as he took his leave.<sup>2</sup>

On arriving at Brussels the Bishop of Ferrara found Philip of Burgundy dangerously ill of a fever. Philip had shown great lukewarmness at Mantua, and had been busied since then in attempting to consolidate the Burgundian dominions by obtaining

Answer of  
Louis XI.  
1462.

Zeal of  
the Duke  
of Bur-  
gundy.  
1462.

<sup>1</sup> Pii II. *Commentarii*, 189-91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

from the Emperor the title of King, and so reviving the old middle kingdom of Lotharingia. But illness awoke again the old man's zeal for the holy cause. The Bishop of Ferrara was admitted to an audience of the Duke, who was in bed. When he heard the Pope's letter he exclaimed, 'I thought that the fever would conquer and would carry me off; but you have brought me health by your message. Death seemed to me hard, because I would leave my father's captivity unavenged on the Turks. Now I will live to avenge my father and benefit Christendom.' He began at once to arrange details with his counsellors, and promised to send an envoy to the Pope in October.<sup>1</sup> Difficulties, however, arose with France. Louis XI. summoned the Duke of Burgundy as his vassal to aid in an expedition against England, and a rebellion of the Liègois against their Bishop occupied the Duke's attention. As he recovered his health, the crusade was again forgotten, and a Papal nuncio, sent in the spring of 1463, to remind the Duke of his promises, found him engaged in festivals, dances, and sports. His counsellors were all opposed to the crusade as both chimerical and dangerous, and they threw all possible hindrances in the way of its accomplishment. Suddenly the Duke took ill and became unconscious; his life was for a time despaired of; but he recovered, and with his recovery his good intentions returned. The Papal envoy was dismissed with a new promise that representatives of Burgundy would be at Rome on August 15.

Perhaps an additional stimulus was given to the determination of Pius II. by a discovery which materially increased the Papal revenues. An Italian merchant who had been driven from Constantinople by the Turks, and who had experience of the alum works of Asia Minor, discovered alum in the barren hills of Tolfa, not far from Cività Vecchia. At first Pius II. was

Increase  
of the  
Papal  
revenues  
by the dis-  
covery of  
alum at  
Tolfa.

<sup>1</sup> *Comment.*, 231.



incredulous; but the discoverer brought workmen from Genoa and established the truth of his surmise. The alum was speedily worked, and proved to be of excellent quality. In April, 1463, Pius II. informed all the faithful of the compassion of Heaven in depriving the unbelievers of the revenues which they obtained from Christians by the sale of alum, which the Holy See was now prepared to supply; he warned them no longer to buy from the Turks.<sup>1</sup> The alum mines of Tolfa were, indeed, as profitable to the Pope as was the year of jubilee, and are said to have yielded a revenue of 100,000 ducats.

The first practical step towards opposing the Turks was the establishment of peace between Frederick III. and Matthias of Hungary, a task which the Pope took earnestly in hand in the spring of 1463. It required two Papal legates to arrange the terms; but at last peace was made in July. Matthias was recognised as king, on condition of paying the Emperor 80,000 ducats and submitting to a rectification of frontier; in case Matthias died childless, Hungary was to go to the Emperor's second son. When Hungary was thus freed from internal troubles, Matthias found no further difficulty in making an alliance with Venice, which had always shown more readiness to help Hungary than had the Pope. Venice was by this time thoroughly alarmed at the losses which the progress of the Turk was inflicting on her commerce, and on September 12 signed an alliance with Hungary for war against the Turks. Meanwhile the Burgundian envoys found Pius II. at Tivoli, and brought him the assurance of their master's zeal. The Pope set out for Rome, where he arrived on September 9, ready to welcome the Italian envoys whom he had summoned to consultation. The Congress at Rome was not so full as had been the Congress of Mantua; but it was more in earnest. The Bishop of Tournay, on the part of the Duke of Burgundy, promised 6000 men in the spring; the Duke himself would lead them if his health allowed.

Pacifica-  
tion of  
Hungary.  
1463.

<sup>1</sup> Bull in Raynaldus, 1463, No. 84. See also *Pii II. Com.*, 185.

Pius II. then asked the Italian envoys for money, according to the Mantuan decree; but all, save Venice, declared that they had no powers for the purpose, and must consult their States. The Florentine envoy privately approached the Pope and warned him that this war would be for the sole benefit of Venice, which, if the Turks were overcome, would turn its hand to the subjugation of Italy; it would be wise to leave the Venetians and the Turks to weaken one another. Pius II. rejected this policy as shortsighted and unworthy of a Christian people, and the envoy referred the Pope's opinion to the Florentine Government.

While awaiting the return of the Italian envoys, Pius II. judged it well to arrange matters with the Cardinals. He knew that his plan was opposed by the French party in the College, and was not popular with those who preferred a quiet life at Rome to a dangerous expedition abroad. Calling a consistory, the Pope addressed the Cardinals. For six years, he said, he had sat on the Papal seat, and the policy which by the advice of the Cardinals he had initiated at Mantua was yet unfulfilled: he had been most desirous to carry it out, but troubles at home prevented him. 'We were bound either to give up Rome or fight against the French, who, despising our commands, contrary to all law occupied the kingdom of Naples and attacked our vassals. We fought for Christ when we defended Ferrante; we warred against the Turks when we smote the lands of Malatesta. At last victory has crowned the Papal arms, and Italy is at peace; at last the time has come for action. "But what," it will be asked, "can you do in war: an old man, a priest, a martyr to a thousand ailments? What use are the Cardinals in a camp? They spent their youth in pleasure; will you starve their old age with war? Better stay at home with your Cardinals, and send your fleet and your money to the Hungarians." It would be sound advice if we had any money; but our treasury is exhausted. Our revenues never exceed 300,000 ducats, and half of that sum is required for the necessary

Speech of  
Pius II.  
to the  
Cardinals.  
Septem-  
ber, 1463.

expenses of the Papal rule. The Turkish war would need 1,000,000 ducats yearly for three years at least. You will say: "If so much is required for the war, what hopes have you of obtaining it before you start?" We answer: "The war is necessary: if we do not undertake it we should be undeservedly infamous". Money is hard to raise, for the people do not trust us. They say that we live in pleasure, amass money, follow our ambition, have fatter mules and better horses than other folk, make broad the hems of our garments, walk through the city with cheeks puffed out beneath a red hat, keep dogs for hunting, give much to actors and parasites, nothing for the defence of the faith. These charges are not altogether false; there are many among the Cardinals and other members of the Curia of whom this is true. There is too much pride and luxury in the Curia; so that when we speak the truth to the people we are so hated that we are not heard. What, then, is to be done? Abstinence, chastity, zeal for the faith, religious fervour, the desire for martyrdom, these made the Roman Church pre-eminent over the world. We must imitate our predecessors, and show that we are willing to sacrifice our lives for the preservation of the flock committed to our charge. Our purpose is to go to war against the Turks, and invite the princes of Christendom to follow. Perchance, when they see their master, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, though old and sick, advancing to the war, they will feel ashamed to stay at home. If this way does not rouse Christians to arms, we know no other. We know that we are going to meet certain death, but that does not deter us. We commit all to God, and will die happy if we end our days in His service.

'You, too, who advised us to begin the war against the Turks, cannot remain at home at ease. The members must follow their head; and what we do is done of necessity. We do not go to fight; but will imitate Moses, who, when Israel fought against Amalek, prayed on the mountain. We will stand on our ship's prow, or on some hilltop, and

having before our eyes the holy Eucharist, will ask from Jesus Christ safety and victory for our soldiers in the battle.<sup>1</sup> God will not despise a contrite heart. You will be with us, and will join your prayers with ours; the old only will be left behind.' Then the Pope explained that he would leave in Rome two legates, one for temporal and the other for spiritual affairs, and would make provisions for the discharge of the ordinary business of the Curia. The nephew Antonio, with 3000 horse and 2000 foot, would provide for the safety of the States of the Church.

The Pope's voice was often broken by tears, in which the Cardinals also joined. When called upon to give their opinions, no one save the Cardinal of Arras spoke very decidedly against the scheme. Though the French party was opposed to it, even Estouteville did not raise any insuperable objections. Cardinal Erolo, though he was one of the six whom the Pope had first consulted, raised some objections, 'to show himself cleverer than any one else,' says the Pope. The objections were, however, overcome, except in the case of the Cardinal of Arras, who left Rome and returned to France.

The Italian envoys soon returned with their answers to the Pope's request for money. Ferrante of Naples, the Duke of Milan, the Marquis of Modena, the Marquis of Mantua, the cities of Bologna and Lucca, all assented. Some states, however, held aloof. Genoa was too busy with her own factions to pay any heed to general matters; the Duke of Savoy and the Marquis of Monteferrate also sent no representatives. The Florentines refused to take any part till they had had time to withdraw their merchants from Constantinople. The Sienese, to the indignation of the Pope, pleaded poverty, and offered the paltry sum of 3000 ducats, which they afterwards increased to 10,000. Pius II. wrote most pressingly to the Duke of

Congress  
at Rome.  
October,  
1463.

<sup>1</sup> In *Pii II. Comm.*, 336, etc.; but the Pope there omits the severer part of the accusations against the clergy which are in Mansi, *Pii II. Orationes*, ii., 168.

Milan, urging him to come in person and assume the command of the Papal forces. The letter of the Pope was a masterpiece of persuasive eloquence; the answer of the Duke was similarly a masterpiece of courteous prevarication. He deplored the woes of Christendom, professed his firm resolve to war against the Turk, his confidence in the Pope, and his desire to do everything that he required; but he added that his health was not yet restored, that the time allowed for preparation was not quite adequate, that the undertaking was difficult, and needed careful measures.<sup>1</sup> The Pope understood that he was not coming in person, and soon learned that 3000 men was all the contingent which he proposed to send.

On October 22 was held a public consistory, in which was read the Pope's Bull proclaiming a crusade. Pius II. recounted all his efforts for the holy cause, proclaimed his zeal, combated objections, called on all to help, and promised indulgences to those who either came in person or contributed their substance.<sup>2</sup> The Bull took two hours to read, and the Pope was gratified with the effect which it produced. 'The sweetness of the composition, the novelty of the thing itself, and the readiness of the Pope offering his life for his sheep, drew tears from many bystanders.'<sup>3</sup> The Bishop of Tournay, on behalf of the Burgundians, warmly thanked the Pope for his zeal. But the Romans were touched by no sentimental enthusiasm for the weal of Christendom; they only saw that the Pope was going to leave Rome, and they feared that the hope of their gains was gone. Pius II. answered their loud murmurs by the assurance that the officials of the Curia would be left behind. Then, racked with gout, till he could scarce restrain himself from showing his anguish, he was carried to his bed.

<sup>1</sup> The Pope's letter is in Mansi, *Orationes*, iii., 103; Sforza's answer in *Pii II. Epistolæ* (ed. Basel), 393.

<sup>2</sup> The Bull 'Ezechielis prophetæ' is No. 412 in *Pii II. Epistolæ* (ed. Basel).

<sup>3</sup> *Pii II. Comment.*, 344.

Alliance  
of Pius II.  
with  
Venice  
and Hun-  
gary.

A few days before Pius II. had signed an alliance with Venice and Hungary, by which they bound themselves to carry on the war for three years if necessary, and no one of the contracting powers was to withdraw without the rest. The Pope promised that, on the arrival of Philip of Burgundy in Italy, he would set out with him for Greece. Hungary and Venice were already engaged in warring against the Turk. Matthias invaded Bosnia with some success, and the Venetians sent a fleet to the Morea which rose against the Turkish yoke: Lemnos and several islands fell into the hands of the Venetians. Cardinal Bessarion was sent by the Pope to Venice, and enjoyed a success such as had never yet befallen him. He was received in state by the Doge on the 'Bucentaur,' and preached the crusade to a people already convinced. A box was placed in the Piazza to receive the contributions of the faithful, and was soon found to contain 700,000 ducats. Pius II. wrote to the Doge, Cristoforo Moro, urging him to come in person to the war, and join the Pope and Philip of Burgundy; if he appeared in ducal array on board the 'Bucentaur,' not Greece only but Asia and all the East would be terrified. 'We shall be three old men,' he says, 'and God rejoices in trinity. Our trinity will be aided by the Trinity of Heaven, and our foes will be trampled under our feet.'<sup>1</sup> The Great Council of Venice voted almost unanimously that the Doge should go; when the Doge, a few days afterwards, tried to excuse himself on the ground of age and incapacity before the Collegio, he was told by one of the Council, 'If your highness will not go of goodwill, we will make you go by force, since the honour and welfare of this land is dearer to us than your person'. The Doge answered that if the land wished it he was content.<sup>2</sup> Before the end of the year news came that the Turks had forced the wall which guarded the entrance to the Peloponnesus,

<sup>1</sup> Malipiero, *Annali Veneti*, in *Archivio Storico Italiano* (prima serie), vol. vii., pt. i., p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Sanudo in Muratori, xxii., 1174.



and had driven out the Venetians. This news did not affect the zeal of Venice, which prepared at once to send out reinforcements ; and it gave Philip of Burgundy an opportunity to write to the Pope and urge a delay in the expedition to enable Venice to recover her strength. Pius II. refused to accede to this request ;<sup>1</sup> he had written, he said, throughout Europe, and must not now delay. In truth, the Pope's legates were busy in almost every land : everywhere they were received with enthusiasm by the people, everywhere they received from the princes fair words enough, but no definite promises of help.<sup>2</sup>

It soon became obvious that the political intrigues of Europe were throwing hindrances in the way even of the accomplishment of such promises as the Pope had received. First of all, Italy received a shock which deeply stirred men's minds, by the news that Louis XI. of France had made an alliance with the Duke of Milan, and had invested him with Genoa and Savona. We have seen that Florence looked with jealous eyes on the crusading project as likely to increase the power of Venice ; she entered into a close alliance with Milan for their mutual protection, and did her utmost to reconcile Francesco Sforza with Louis XI. of France.<sup>3</sup> Louis XI. was embarrassed with the possession of Savona, in which the French garrison was entirely useless since the loss of Genoa to the French. He was not indisposed to rid himself of an incumbrance, and in doing so to gain an ally in North Italy. The Neapolitan war had taught him the power of Sforza, and Louis XI. had a genuine admiration for a man whose success had been so brilliant. In February, 1464, Savona was given up to the Milanese, and the Italian Powers were astonished by a notification from Louis XI. that he had made over to the Duke of Milan his rights over Genoa.

Political  
alarms in  
Italy.  
1464.

<sup>1</sup> Raynaldus, 1464, 4, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See book xiii. of *Pii II. Commentarii*, published by Voigt, *Æneas Sylvius*, ii., 360, etc., from the hitherto unedited MS.

<sup>3</sup> See Buser, *Die Beziehungen der Mediceer zu Frankreich*, p. 101, etc.

This news filled Italy with alarm. It was clearly a blow aimed by Florence and Milan against Venice. The Duke of Modena feared this increase of the power of Milan; Lucca and Siena were afraid of the designs of Florence; Ferrante of Naples thought himself betrayed to the French by his former ally. Sforza tried to restore confidence by protesting that he had entered into no engagements which could disturb the peace of Italy; by taking Genoa into his power he had removed the only ground for French interference in Italian affairs. The Archbishop of Genoa, Paolo Fregoso, who was at the head of the government of the city, clamoured for help against Sforza; but Pius II. advised him to submit rather than hinder the war against the Turks. The archbishop fled, and Sforza advanced against the city. It was at all events clear that neither Milan nor Genoa would send any forces to the crusade.

From Burgundy also the Pope received doubtful news. Duke Philip was not on good terms with his son Charles, who had left his court and gone to Holland. If Philip went to the Turkish war, Charles would naturally be regent during his absence, and this prospect was very distasteful to a strong party headed by the powerful family of the Croy. They strove to increase the feud between the Duke and his son so as to keep Philip at home. Philip, however, was resolute. Charles returned, and was reconciled to his father. Next the Croy represented to the Duke the dangers which might befall his land if he departed before the war between France and England was at an end; they besought him to remain, at least till a truce was arranged. Louis XI. joined his entreaties to the same purpose; if a truce were made with England, France could join in the crusade with Burgundy. The Duke wavered, and asked the Pope to defer the expedition for the purpose of this pacification. Pius II. knew that delay meant entire failure, and refused. Then the Croy managed to bring about an interview between Louis XI. and the Duke at Lille in February, 1464. Louis XI. repeated his desire

Trouble  
in Bur-  
gundy.  
1464.

that the Duke should stay till France was at peace with England: neither Venice nor the Pope was ready; in a year's time he would send 10,000 men to the Turkish war. When the Duke pleaded his promise, Louis XI. ordered him as his vassal to remain at home, and handed him a written injunction to obey. The Duke gave way, and announced to his people the King's commands: next year he would himself go against the Turk; meanwhile, not to disappoint the Pope, he would send his illegitimate son, the Bastard of Burgundy, with 2000 men. The tower, says Pius II., fell at last before the repeated strokes of the battering-ram, and the Croy triumphed.<sup>1</sup>

Pius II. had left Rome in February to recruit his health at the baths of Petrioli, and stayed at Siena during the month of March. On Thursday in Holy Week, the day on which excommunications were published, the Pope anathematised all heretics, and all, even kings, who strove to hinder the crusade. The anathema was aimed at those who were shaking the constancy of the Duke of Burgundy; but Pius II. soon found that it had been delivered too late. On Good Friday, March 30, he received the letter of the Duke of Burgundy, 'worthy,' he says, 'of being read on the day of the Lord's Passion'. Yet Pius II. was not entirely unprepared for the blow; he had already consulted with eight Cardinals, who were present, what course he should adopt in case Philip refused to go. They were unanimous in their opinion that, though the Pope was in that case released from his engagement, he should solemnly renew it. This was also his opinion; and he communicated his resolution as a decree to the absent Cardinals, who murmured at his obstinacy.

Pius II. was resolute in his determination in spite of all hindrances. Yet we cannot assign this resolution solely to zeal for the good of Christendom; there was mixed with it also a motive of utility for the

Persist-  
ency of  
Pius II.

Pius II.  
fears  
George of  
Bohemia.

<sup>1</sup> *Pii II. Commentarii*, book xiii., in Voigt, ii., 369, etc.

interests of the Papacy. There was still a power in Europe which stood opposed to the Pope, and whose activity threatened danger. George of Bohemia was a formidable foe, and had devised a scheme which might lead to serious results if it were not baffled. Pius II. had brought to an issue the question of the relations between Bohemia and the Holy See. George must either alienate the majority of his people by submitting to the Pope's demands, or must expose himself, by refusing, to the hostility of a determined minority who looked for help outside Bohemia. The aim of George was to pacify Bohemia on the basis of toleration offered by the Compacts, and weld it into a powerful kingdom. The Pope was keenly alive to the danger which might ensue if a power at variance with the authority of the Church became predominant in Germany. Pius II. and George were equally convinced of the magnitude of the issue at stake. Each was equally resolute and equally far-seeing; but the Pope had the advantage of being able to choose his time for the attack. George met it by attempting to inaugurate a new policy in European affairs. He had first hoped to cope with the Papacy by possessing himself of the Empire; when that failed, he stayed the Pope's hand by binding the Emperor to his cause by conferring benefits upon him. This could only be a temporary check; he tried to find a permanent one in the establishment of a confederation of European States against the Papal aggression. According to his scheme the States of Christendom were to take back again into their hands the supremacy in matters temporal and spiritual which they had been content to delegate to the Emperor and the Pope; a Council of European States was to regulate the international relations of Christendom.

The agent of George in this matter was Anton Marini, a knight of Grenoble, who in August, 1462, proposed to Venice a league between France, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, Burgundy and Saxony, for war against the Turk. Venice replied that notwithstanding Marini's arguments the Pope's co-operation was necessary; for the

George's  
plan for a  
parliament  
of Euro-  
pean  
princes.

presence of the head of Christendom was of great weight in such a plan.<sup>1</sup> Louis XI., in his anger against the Pope, listened to Marini's proposals, and sent him back to Venice with an expression of his readiness to join such a league. Venice, now engaged in war against the Turks, was ready to accept help from any side; and the league of the Pope with Venice and Hungary was no doubt hastened by a desire to cut away the ground from Marini's feet. The crusade of the Pope was in part an appeal to the sympathies of Europe to defeat the machinations of the Bohemian King. He could not shrink from it without giving a dangerous handle to his foe. In March, 1464, Marini was at the Court of Hungary, offering Matthias a league against the Turks and a Council of European Powers to promote the peace and welfare of Christendom; in June he was at the Court of Louis XI. In the face of such activity Pius II. could not retreat from his engagement.

Pius II., however, though determined to proceed on his expedition, had neither the physical vigour nor the qualities requisite for the organisation of such a scheme. Money came in slowly from Italy, and the Burgundian envoys at Rome saw little to impress them with a sense of military stir; they reported that it was the poorest preparation they had ever seen, and that two galleys only were ready.<sup>2</sup> The Pope vaguely trusted that soldiers would flock from different parts of Europe, prepared to serve for at least six months at their own expense, and that the Venetians would give them convoys. The crusade was preached with zeal throughout Europe by the friars; but they were scarcely to be trusted to arrange in an intelligible shape definite instructions to the crusaders. Many flocked to Venice before the time, and met only with scoffs when they had not money to pay their passage. The clear-sighted

Prepara-  
tions for  
the cru-  
sade.

<sup>1</sup> Palacky, *Urkundliche Beiträge*, p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> Chastellain, ed. Buchon, part iii., ch. xxi.: 'Selon leur rapport c'estoit la plus povre disposition qu'ils veirent oncques; et n'avoit en tout le monde, pour celle heure, que deux gallées'.

Venetians did not want enthusiasm but capacity on the part of those engaged in the enterprise. Their cruelty was published throughout Europe; but wiser heads thought that they had exercised a justifiable discretion.<sup>1</sup> Many crusaders returned with disappointed hopes; many died of hunger and pestilence; many came to Rome or Ancona, and found no signs of preparation.

Pius II. returned to Rome early in May to prepare for his departure. Before going he aimed a blow at George of Bohemia, whom, in a consistory on June 6, he cited to appear in Rome within 180 days to answer to the many charges against him. Pacific as he might now feel towards other Powers, Pius II. could make no truce with Bohemia. The beginning of his crusade was to him an earnest of his triumph over the heretical king. The time had come to lay the axe to the root of the tree that had threatened to overshadow the Holy See with its branches.

On June 18 he took the cross in S. Peter's, and after repeating his conviction of the necessity of his undertaking, and deploring the hindrances which it had suffered, he prayed before the high altar and then set out in his litter accompanied by all the prelates. At Ponte Molle he took leave of them, and attended by the Cardinal of Pavia, the Bishop of Torcello, Tiferno, and Camertino, his secretary Goro Lolli, and his nephew Andrea, embarked on a barge on the Tiber. This method of conveyance was chosen to spare the Pope the fatigue of a land journey; he was already suffering from a slight fever, but forbade his physicians to mention it. The first night was spent by the Pope on the barge, as he was too weary to quit it. Navigation was difficult up the stream, and on the second night he had only advanced to Fiano. On the third

Citation of  
George of  
Bohemia.  
June 6,  
1464.

Departure  
of Pius II.  
on his  
crusade.  
June 18,  
1464.

<sup>1</sup> Chastellain, ch. xx.: 'Les Venétiens, qui sages gens sont et clervoians, firent mieux de véer le passage à tel monde de gens inutiles que de leur ouvrir; car ne soufit point en tel cas d'avoir les gens, més il convient avoir le sens et le pouvoir pour faire effect'.



day the Pope was grievously distressed by an accident which befell one of the rowers, who fell into the river and was drowned before his eyes. Pius II. lay silent and with tears prayed for his soul. Cardinal Carvajal came to him from Rome with the news that a crowd of crusaders were assembled at Ancona vainly seeking for means of transport; the authorities of the city were afraid of a tumult and besought the Pope to take means to prevent it. Pius II. besought Carvajal in spite of his seventy years to undertake this difficult task, and the brave old man, already broken by his many labours, answered, 'My motto is, Go and I go: I cannot refuse to Christ's service the end of my life'. Next morning he set off for Ancona.

The Pope proceeded up the Tiber as far as Otricoli, whence he was carried in a litter by easy stages to Spoleto. There the Cardinal of Pavia was seized with a fever and had to be left behind. Already the Pope was distressed by the sight of crusaders returning from Ancona; to hide from his eyes this melancholy sight, the physicians pretended that the wind was injurious to him and closed the curtains of his litter. Slowly he proceeded under the blazing heat of an Italian summer through Foligno, Assissi, and Fabriano, across the Apennines to Loreto; there he offered a golden cup and bowl to the Virgin, whose cottage had been borne by angels from Bethlehem to its resting place on a hill by the Adriatic. Finally on July 18 he entered Ancona and took up his abode in the Bishop's palace, on the hill by the Church of S. Ciriaco.

Pius II.  
arrives at  
Ancona.  
July 18,  
1464.

The first question was how to deal with the crowd of crusaders who disturbed the peace of the citizens of Ancona. Pius II. had only asked for such as would serve for six months at their own cost; he found a miserable herd expecting him to supply them with pay and food. As this was impossible, the Pope rewarded their zeal by a plenary indulgence; and they sold their arms as a means of obtaining money to take them to their homes. Those who could afford to do so remained in expectation of

Pius II.  
and the  
crusaders.

the Venetian ships which were to give them transport. Day by day they waited; but the ships delayed. At last the crusaders gradually dispersed, so that when the ships came in sight there were no soldiers to embark. The Pope meanwhile lay helpless and saw his hopes fade away. Messengers moreover arrived from Ragusa that the Turkish army had advanced to the siege and demanded the immediate surrender of its vessels. Pius II. called Carvajal to counsel. 'What must be done,' he asked, 'if Ragusa is besieged?' 'I will go to-night,' answered the intrepid old man, 'with the two galleys that are in the harbour and will either break the siege or give spirit to the disconsolate citizens.' 'What hinders me from sailing with you?' said the Pope, 'the knowledge of my presence will either drive away the Turks or will incite Christendom to follow with help.' Cardinal Ammannati, who had recovered from his fever and had followed the Pope, cried out against this plan. 'I, miserable,' he says, 'savouring of the flesh rather than of the spirit, dissuaded him, not because I did not think that what he proposed would succeed, but because I saw that to his body wasted with fever the voyage would bring the end.' Yet the Pope remained firm in his intentions; and preparations were being made, when in four days the news was brought that the Turks had retired from Ragusa.

Pius II. was rapidly sinking; the fever raged fiercely and the burning heat of the weather denied him any relief. The physicians said that he had but a few days to live, when at last on the morning of August 12 the Venetian fleet was seen in the offing. The Pope roused himself and ordered his galleys to advance to meet them. He was carried with difficulty to the window of his chamber whence he could see the stately entry of the fleet into the harbour. Next day he was too ill to receive a visit from the Doge. The day after was the eve of the Assumption of the Virgin, when it was customary for the Pope to appear at Vespers. He could not go, but sent the Cardinals and afterwards summoned them to his bed. He told them

Death of  
Pius II.  
August 14,  
1464.

that his last hour was at hand; he died in the faith of Christ and committed to their hands the work which he had begun. He admonished them to behave worthily of their high calling, and asked forgiveness if he had offended them in aught. Finally he commended to their good offices his household and his relatives. The Cardinals wept, and Bessarion as their spokesman said a few farewell words and begged for his blessing. All kissed his hand in tears, and he blessed them saying: 'May the God of pity pardon you and confirm a right spirit within you!' Then he received the sacrament, and arranged to receive it again next morning from the hands of Cardinal Ammannati in special honour of the Virgin. But as the sun went down Pius II. also began to sink. He received extreme unction and was left alone with Cardinal Ammannati, Goro Lolli, and his nephew, Andrea. He talked a little with Ammannati and again commended his nephews to his care. Ammannati asked him if he wished to be buried at Rome. 'Who will take care of that?' he answered with tears. When Ammannati undertook to do so he seemed relieved. Again he beckoned Ammannati to his bedside. 'Pray for me, my son,' he said, 'for I am a sinner.' Then after a pause he added, 'Bid my brethren continue this holy expedition, and help it all you can; woe to you if you desert God's work'. Ammannati could not speak for tears; the Pope put his arm round his neck, and said, 'Do good, my son, and pray to God for me'. They were the last words he spoke. He listened to the prayers that were being read till his spirit passed away.<sup>1</sup>

Next day the corpse of Pius II. was borne into the cathedral, and the funeral mass was said. Then the Cardinals assembled in the palace, and the Doge of Venice, in a long speech, bewailed the Pope's death, praised his zeal, and

<sup>1</sup> The account of the last hours of Pius II. is given by Cardinal Ammannati, *Commentarii*, 357-62, also in his letters, Nos. 41-57. Campanus adds a few details, but Ammannati was an eye-witness, and Campanus only knew by hearsay. I have only followed him for a few of the more personal remarks of Pius II. which Ammannati might think it desirable to omit.

besought the Cardinals to elect a worthy successor. The Cardinals decided to show their good intentions by giving over to the Doge the Papal galleys which lay in the harbour, on condition that they should be restored to the new Pope if he purposed undertaking the expedition in person. The money which Pius II. left behind, 48,000 ducats, was sent by them to Matthias of Hungary. Next day, August 16, the Doge sailed back to Venice, and the crusade of Pius II. was at an end. The body of the Pope was taken to Rome, and buried in S. Peter's, in the chapel of S. Andrea; thence it was transferred, when S. Peter's was restored by Paul V., in 1614, to the Church of S. Andrea della Valle, where a monument was erected in his honour.

Contem-  
porary  
opinions  
about the  
crusade.

Pius II. was lucky in the moment of his death. He left behind him the touching memory of an old man who died in the attempt to do his duty. When the princes of Europe were heedless of the welfare of Christendom, the dying Pope painfully dragged his feeble body to martyrdom for the common weal. It was well that he died when he did; for his expedition had no elements of success, and was already doomed to failure. He died before its failure had become too manifest, before an inevitable retreat exposed to ridicule the Papal prestige. He died in time to bequeath to Christendom the memory of the greatness of his undertaking, unblurred by any feeling of its hopelessness. The feeling of his contemporaries is shown by a coin struck in his honour, which bore the impress of a pelican feeding its young with its own blood; underneath was the inscription—

Ales ut hæc cordis pavi de sanguine natos.

Like this bird I feed my children with my heart's blood.<sup>1</sup>

Yet even at the last there were many who were incredulous of the Pope's intentions. It was the doom of Pius II., even on his deathbed, to be distrusted by those who could not forget his previous career, who sought in all he did for some

<sup>1</sup> Vanuti, *Numismata Pontificum Romanorum*, p. 21.

motive of self-interest or vain display. The Venetians did not think that he was in earnest. The Doge, on his arrival at Ancona, regarded the Pope's illness as a feint, and sent his own physician to see if it was real. He was of opinion that his arrival was a disappointment to the Pope, who never intended to go on the expedition, and hoped to escape by throwing the blame on Venice.<sup>1</sup> Filelfo was still more ill-natured. He declared that Pius II. had gone to Ancona to seize the citadel, and hand over the town to his nephew Andrea; then he intended to sail to Ragusa and await quietly the result of the Hungarian arms; if they were defeated he would at once retreat, if they succeeded he would go to Constantinople and seize it for a Piccolomini.<sup>2</sup> The Milanese envoy did not credit the Pope with any loftier pretensions; he reported to Sforza that, if Pius II. had lived, he meant to sail to Brindisi and stay there during the winter, return to Rome in the spring, and throw the blame of failure on the lukewarmness of the princes of Christendom.<sup>3</sup> A Brescian chronicler imputes to him another design: he went to Ancona without any intention of proceeding farther, simply in consequence of a secret understanding with Florence and Milan for the purpose of seizing Ancona, and handing it over to the Florentine republic.<sup>4</sup> Italy was so accustomed to look upon Pius II. as an astute diplomatist that she could not credit him with purely disinterested motives.

It is the fate of a character like Pius II. to lend itself to different interpretations, and to remain enigmatical. One who has changed his opinions is always liable to the charge of insincerity, which comes with double force when a policy of easy pliancy raises him to a lofty position. Such a judgment, however, is

Different  
views of  
the char-  
acter of  
Pius II.

<sup>1</sup> Malipiero, p. 29: 'El Papa sentì gran dolor, perchè ghe despiaseva andar in persona, e ghe despiaseva anche mancar della promessa'.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Filelfo to Paul II., September 15, 1464.

<sup>3</sup> Simoneta, in Mur., xxi., 764.

<sup>4</sup> Cristoforo da Soldo, *ibid.*, p. 900.

generally crude, and misses the real elements of character. The distinguishing feature of Pius II. was his readiness to learn from events. He equipped himself with the panoply of the new learning, and went forth as a knight-errant in quest of adventures. He had no prepossessions, no prejudices, no definite opinions. His object was to make the most of life, to learn from its experience, to win what it had to give, to reap its successes, to adapt himself to its requirements. Æneas Sylvius was not an adventurer in the sense that he intended to prey upon the world; he was an explorer who set out bravely upon the stormy sea of life, resolved to make his voyage as prosperous as might be. He was ready to run before the wind, to make for any haven which he could reach with sails flying. His skill consisted in seeing how the wind was likely to blow, and steering his course accordingly. He cannot claim the praise of high resolve, of steady purpose, of great design, or laborious achievement. He was not a man to mould the world; but he frankly offered himself for the world to mould. He was not heroic; but he was not base. He cannot fairly be accused of self-seeking, for self was in him the product of the exigencies amongst which his lot was cast. He was content to do the thing which needed to be done, and to reap the fruits of his foresight in being the first to perceive its necessity.

Many, we might say the majority, of politicians have little better claims to respect than Pius II.; but no man who rose to such distinction has left behind him so complete a record of his career. It is hard that Pius II. should be treated with contempt because he was a man of letters as well as a man of action, because he has frankly told us his impressions of events as they arose. We know his inconsistencies chiefly from his own confessions, while for those who have been more reserved about themselves we are at liberty to frame an imaginary consistency. The very frankness of Pius II. is a proof of his sincerity: he did not wish to make himself out to be nobler than he was. The record



of his soul's progress might contain pages which he wished to forget; but he left all to the judgment of posterity, with the consciousness that in the end the verdict formed on the fullest knowledge would be the truest and most lenient. He who fixes his attention upon a few passages of the life of Pius II. tends to judge him with severity; he who follows him through his whole career forgives him much, and recognises a steady growth in greatness and nobility. Weakness and strength are strangely blended; vanity and littleness mix with high purpose and far-reaching plans; but before the eyes of Pius II. there floated fitfully a loftier ideal of Christendom than was visible to any of his contemporaries, and juster views than he was enabled to express in action.

It was the fate of Pius II. to reap the fruit of his early inconsistencies. In 1440, while secretary of Felix V., he wrote some dialogues in favour of the conciliar system, which he sent to the University of Köln.<sup>1</sup> During his Pontificate, a quarrel arose between the burghers of Liège and their bishop; the bishop was upheld by the Pope, the burghers applied to the University of Köln, which used the authority of Æneas Sylvius for an appeal to a better-instructed Pope. This drew from Pius II. a Bull addressed to the University, dated April 26, 1463, in which he gives his own defence of his early life.<sup>2</sup> He erred, he says, 'but what mortal does not err? Who is wise save the good; who is good save God alone? We walked in darkness; we erred not to ourselves alone, but drew others with us; as blind leaders of the blind, we fell with them into the ditch. Our writings may have deceived many, whose blood if God require at our hands, we can only answer that as men we sinned, and our hope is placed in God's mercy only. Some would rather die than confess

Pius II.'s  
Bull of  
Retraction.  
April,  
1463.

<sup>1</sup> They are printed in Kollar, *Analecta Vindobonensia*, ii., 685.

<sup>2</sup> He had done so previously, in 1447, in a letter to the Rector of the University of Köln; see *supra*, pp. 104-5. Fea's *Pius II. a calumniis vindicatus* gives the completest version of this Bull, 'In minoribus agentes'; Raynaldus, 1463, 114, etc., gives extracts.

their error. Some go on in their error, that they may keep the reputation of constancy, and act with pride, wishing to seem gods rather than men, as did Hus and Jerome, who were burned at Constance. We are men, and confess that as men we sinned; not, however, like Arius and Nestorius, who deliberately chose the way that was condemned; we sinned like Paul, and ignorantly persecuted the Church and the Holy See. We are ashamed of our error, we repent of our writings and our deeds; but we did more hurt by writing than by deeds. What are we to do? The word once written and sent forth speeds on irrevocable; our writings are not now in our power, they have fallen into many hands and are generally read. Would that they were in obscurity, lest they cause scandal in the future, lest men say, "He who wrote this sat at length in S. Peter's seat". We fear lest the words of Æneas be counted those of Pius.'

To avoid this, the Pope goes on to say, he will imitate the example of S. Augustine, and make full confession of his short-comings. He professes his belief in the commission given by Christ to S. Peter, in the supremacy of S. Peter's successors over the Universal Church. 'If you find anything contrary to this doctrine either in our Dialogues, or in our Letters, or in our other works (for we wrote much in our youth), cast it forth and condemn it. Follow what we now say: believe the old man rather than the youth; esteem not the layman higher than the Pope; reject Æneas, accept Pius; the Gentile name was given us by our parents at our birth, the Christian name we took on our Pontificate. Perhaps some may say that our opinion came to us with the Papacy, that our views were changed by our dignity. It was not so; far otherwise.'

Pius II. goes on to plead his youth and inexperience when first he went to Basel. Great names supported the Council, and he heard nothing save abuse of Eugenius IV. The Pope himself at last recognised the Council, and when he attempted to transfer it the claims of the Council were zealously put forward. 'We taught, therefore, what we

heard, and after some years, thinking we were somebody, we exclaimed with Juvenal—

*Semper ego auditor tantum, nunquamne reponam?*<sup>1</sup>

We were ashamed always to be a pupil; we began to talk, and occupy the teacher's place; we wrote letters and pamphlets, and, like all poets, loved our own children and were pleased with the applause they won. When Cesarini and others left Basel, we believed that they acted through fear of losing their temporalities; as we had none to lose, we boldly stayed, and on the deposition of Eugenius IV. accepted Felix as the true Vicar of Christ. But when Frederick, the future Emperor, came to Basel and refused to treat Felix as Pope, then first we began to think it possible that we were in error. As we would not willingly err, we accepted his invitation to join his household, and went over to the neutral side that we might learn the truth. At the Court of Frederick we discovered the falsity of much that had been said against Eugenius. In the Diets of Germany we heard both sides, and the darkness at last fell from our eyes; we recognised our error, we went to Rome, cast off the doctrines of Basel, submitted to Eugenius, and were reconciled to the Roman Church. Not till after that did we assume the priesthood. Such was our conversion, in which Thomas of Sarzana, afterwards Pope Nicolas V., had the chief share.'

Pius II. is frank enough in his confession, and probably believed that he was actually frank. He might phrase it as he chose, but men credited him solely with a capacity for floating with the stream. His keen susceptibility to outward circumstances and impressions was the secret of his greatness, and was at the same time the source of his weakness. It brought him to the highest earthly dignity; but it robbed him of the strength to secure the lasting fame that his great gifts might otherwise have deserved. He aspired as Pope to be the leader of Christen-

<sup>1</sup> Still shall I hear and never quit the score?

dom ; but he had not the moral position to inspire the confidence necessary for this task. His equivocal past rose up against him at every turn, and the mental habits of his early life prevented him from rising to the greatness after which he longed. He could not resist the temptation of grasping the advantage which he saw to be immediately attainable. Though he saw clearly and declared resolutely that the expulsion of the Turks from Europe was the first duty of Christendom, he had not sufficient self-restraint to devote himself with singleness of purpose to the task which he recognised as supreme. The conquest of the States of the Church, the aggrandisement of the Piccolomini, the restoration of the Papal prestige, the abolition of the last spark of the conciliar spirit—these he pursued when a tempting opportunity offered, and did not trust that if he was faithful to his first great duty all else would follow unsought. To him and to Nicolas V. alike culture gave largeness of mind, and set a lofty imaginative ideal. But in Nicolas V. the ideal subordinated to itself the strong practical sense which he possessed : he swept away all obstacles from his path, and devoted himself with unceasing energy to the one object that he had in view. In Pius II. practical capacity was led away into any field which offered a tempting opportunity for its display ; the imaginative ideal remained imaginative to the last. Pius II.'s energies were expended on a number of small matters in which success was possible at the time, but little result remained for the future. He grew conscious that fame was slipping away from his grasp, and rallied his dying force to give a faint expression to the aspirations which he really felt, but was not strong enough to turn to shape.

Those who saw Pius II. close at hand were impressed by his geniality, his mental quickness, and his unceasing energy in spite of bodily infirmities. Platina has left us a finished picture of the master whom he respected above all others whom he served. 'Pius II.,' he says, 'was a man of undoubted courage and

Character  
given by  
Platina  
and Cam-  
pano.

remarkable foresight, born not for ease and idleness, but for conversance with great affairs. He so apportioned his time that he could not be accused of slothfulness. He rose with the dawn, and after divine service at once engaged in public business. Then he was carried through the gardens for a little relaxation before breakfast. He was moderate in his use of food, and did not care for delicacies: he was very sparing of wine, which he drank greatly diluted. After breakfast he would talk for half an hour with his attendants, then enter his chamber for rest and devotion: after that he would read or write as long as his public duties permitted. After dinner he did the same, and read or dictated till late at night, lying in his bed; he never slept more than five or six hours. In appearance he was below middle height, slender in his youth, but gaining flesh in old age. His eyes were cheerful, but kindled easily with anger; his head was prematurely bald. His face was pallid, and fell with the slightest sign of illness.<sup>1</sup> He was attacked almost every month by stone; he suffered from gout, so that he had almost lost the use of his legs; he was also troubled by a cough. So severe were his sufferings that often there seemed nothing but his voice to tell you that he was alive. He had such command over himself that, while racked with stone, he would continue a speech without giving any sign of his pain except by biting his lips. He could endure toil, hunger, thirst, and heat. He was always easy of access, sparing of words, and unwilling to refuse a petition. He was quick to anger, but quick to repress it. He readily pardoned insolence unless it injured the Apostolic seat, whose dignity he steadfastly upheld. Towards his household he was kind and genial: those who erred through ignorance or sloth he admonished with fatherly affection. He never put down those who spoke against him, for he wished all to speak freely in a free state. When some one complained one day of being maligned, "You will find plenty

<sup>1</sup> I have introduced a few more particular details given by Campano *Vita Pii II.*

who abuse me, too," said the Pope, "if you go into the Campo dei Fiori". He had no love for luxury, saying that books were his sapphires and chrysolites. He did not care for grandeur at table, but preferred to picnic by a fountain or in a wood. When he was in the country he never dined indoors, save in winter, or when the weather was wet. One day a shepherd gave him a wooden cup full of milk, and his attendants smiled to see how dirty it was. "It is cleaner," he said, "than the cup of Artaxerxes: he who is thirsty does not need a glass." He loved the country, and inquired about everything he saw, connecting the history with the place, and expounding it to them around him.

He was a man true, upright, open, without deceit or simulation. He was a devout and sincere Christian, frequent in confession and communion. He despised dreams, portents, and prodigies, and showed no sign of timidity. He was neither elated in prosperity nor depressed by adversity. "Misfortune," he used to say, "could be cured by wisdom, if it were applied in time." He was a master of proverbs, of which the following may be quoted :—

Apophtegms of Pius II.

' The nature of God can be better grasped by believing than by disputing.

' Christianity, even if it were not approved by miracles, ought to be received for its own worth (*honestate*).

' A miser cannot be satisfied with money, nor a wise man with knowledge.

' He who knows most is most persecuted by doubt.

' Serious matters are settled by arms, not by laws.

' A cultivated man submits his own house to his city, his city to his country, his country to the world, and the world to God.

' As rivers flow to the sea, so vices flow to courts.

' A king who trusts no one is useless, and he is no better who believes all.

' He who rules many ought to be ruled by many.

' Fit men should be given to dignities, not dignities to men.<sup>1</sup>

' Bad physicians kill the body, unskilful priests the soul.

' Their virtues enriched the clergy, their vices make them poor.

' For weighty causes marriage was taken from the priests, for weightier it ought to be restored.

' He who spoils his son nourishes an enemy.

' A miser pleases men in nothing save his death.'

<sup>1</sup> ' Dignitatibus viros dandos, non dignitates hominibus.'



These appreciative remarks of Platina show us that the personality of Pius II. was deeply attractive to his associates. But the character which Platina has sketched is that of a cultivated man of letters, not of a statesman or a theologian. It is, indeed, as a man of letters that Pius II. has the deepest claims on our attention. He is one of the earliest representatives of the man of letters pure and simple; he is, perhaps, the only man of letters who has been equally eminent in literature and in statesmanship. His capacity for affairs developed out of his literary instinct; the keen eye and the ready apprehension, which he gained from the study of the world around him, were the means by which he won his way to high position. When first he came to Basel, fresh from his university career, he had a young man's gift for writing verses, which he exercised in Ovidian love poems and Horatian epistles. He wrote a long poem, which he called 'Nymphiplexis,' in honour of the mistress of his Sienese friend Mariano de' Sozini, and rejoiced that it was more than two thousand lines in length.<sup>1</sup> It has not come down to us; but Campano pronounced it to be flowing rather than correct in versification. Æneas prided himself on his poetry, and gladly received from Frederick III. the laureate's crown. But he soon had the practical sense to see that Latin verse would not do much for him, and his attendance at the Council stimulated him to seek the reputation of an orator. The example of Cesarini fired his emulation. Night after night he spent in study, while his comrade, Piero da Noceto, who shared his room, would laugh and say, 'Why thus exhaust yourself, Æneas? Fortune favours the unlearned as much as the learned.'<sup>2</sup> Still Æneas studied, and seized the first opportunity to air his eloquence; but it is noticeable that he spoke in behalf of a hopeless proposal to

Pius II. as  
a man of  
letters.

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.*, 35 (ed. Basel): 'Absolvi libellum versuum ultra duo milia quem appellavi Nymphiplexim de laudibus Baptistæ tuæ'. Campanus calls it 'Niraphileticum versu magis facili et expedito quam accurato'.

<sup>2</sup> Æneas recalls this twelve years after in a letter of 1456. *Ep.*, 188 (ed. Basel).

transfer the Council to Pavia. He spoke merely to win the applause of the Fathers and to gain the good graces of the Duke of Milan. His oratory was artificial, and lacked depth of purpose and sincerity. Æneas was never sufficiently in earnest to be a great speaker, nor was he a sufficiently polished master of words to satisfy the cultivated taste of the Italians.<sup>1</sup> But the Fathers of Basel were wearied with the formless utterances of scholastic disputants, which might be logical in reasoning but were wearisome to hear. The neat, flowing, and ornate style of Æneas pleased them, and he established his reputation as an orator.

The chief quality of the mind of Æneas was a ready receptivity of outward impressions, which prompted him to narrative writing. He seems to have designed a history of the Council of Basel, and wrote a description of the city, which was to serve as an introduction.<sup>2</sup> If his work had been carried out, he would have given us a precious memorial of the actual life at Basel, and of the intrigues in the Council; what knowledge we have on these points comes from his letters.<sup>3</sup> Probably, however, Æneas felt that such a work would lead him into questions of controversy, in which he had no keen personal interest. He did not, therefore, write the history of the Council as a whole; but in 1440, when he was secretary of Felix V., he wrote three books of Commentaries on the Council of Basel, which dealt only with the circumstances leading to the deposition of Eugenius IV. and the election of Felix V. The work was really a pamphlet in defence of his master Felix; only here and there do we find the vivid touches of personal interest attaching to its pages, which otherwise merely cast the cover of an historical narrative over the learned arguments

Historical  
works of  
Pius II.

<sup>1</sup> So Campano judges: 'Sententiis quam verbis illustriores; copia mira et ad magnitudinem rerum excrecente'.

<sup>2</sup> It is given in Urstisius, *Epitome historiae Basileæ*.

<sup>3</sup> Especially that of May 21, 1437, to Piero da Noceto, in Mansi, xxxi., 220.

adduced by theologians in the Council's favour. The preface is ingeniously adapted to beguile the reader, unawares, into a controversial pamphlet, and with an affected artlessness to beg promotion for the writer. 'It is my misfortune,' says Æneas, 'to waste my energies on writing history when I ought to spend them in providing for my old age. My friends say to me, "What are you doing, Æneas? Are you not ashamed, at your age, of having no money? Do you not know that a man should be stalwart at twenty, cautious at thirty, rich at forty? He who has passed that limit will try in vain."' I acknowledge the truth of this; time after time I have put aside poets and historians, but like a moth round a candle I flutter back to my ruin. Since fate wills it, so let it be. The poor as well as the rich can live till death calls him. Poverty is wretched in old age, but it is the more wretched to those who have no taste for literature. I will enjoy what heaven sends, content, in the words of Horace—

Nec turpem senectam  
Degere nec cithara carentem.'

In this graceful way Æneas announced that he was serving Felix in hopes of preferment; nor was the form of historical writing the only one which he Dialogues  
of Pius II. was prepared to use for this purpose. He followed the example of Poggio in reviving the Ciceronian dialogue. The occasion of this production was a decision given by the University of Köln to some questions submitted to them by their Archbishop concerning the controversy between Eugenius and Felix. The University set forth their views in three propositions, which asserted the supremacy of general councils, condemned the German neutrality, and said that the Church was synodically assembled at Basel, if the Council had not been lawfully translated. The saving clause was, as Æneas calls it, 'the sting at the end of the serpent's tail'; and Æneas generously offered the University of Köln to remove its venom. His interest really lay in stating the common-place arguments in favour of the

Council with taste and grace. For this purpose he wrote his pamphlet in a series of dialogues. He and his co-secretary, Martin Lefranc, a Frenchman, are returning from a day's ramble outside Basel, delighted with their holiday, expatiating on the blessings of a country life, and expanding the Virgilian idylls into very tolerable Latin prose. Another couple draws near them, Nicolas of Cusa and a Novarese legist, Stefano da Caccia, also in earnest converse. Æneas and his friend retire behind the bushes and listen to their disputation. The literary skill of the dialogue consists in the alternation of the two pairs of interlocutors. When the scholastic arguments of Cusa and his friend may be supposed to have wearied the reader, Æneas gives a little relief by discussions on classical archæology, literature, history. When quotations from Fathers and decrees of Councils have palled, quotations from Virgil and Latin historians succeed. This reaches a climax when Cusa and Caccia pause at vespers to say their hours. Æneas and Martin agree that literary discussion is more profitable than the repetition of canonical hours, which may be a useful solace in the cloister, but is a weariness to men of learning. The two pairs at length show themselves to one another. Cusa, who had maintained the cause of Eugenius, confesses himself vanquished, and goes back to Basel to sup with Lefranc. Æneas also invites himself on the ground that he is so poor he has nothing in his house. We are tempted to think that the dialogues of Æneas, like the propositions which he combats, were meant to carry their point in their tail.<sup>1</sup>

At Vienna Æneas had increased reason to use his pen for the purpose of gaining fame. He turned again to light and frivolous subjects, wrote love poems, epigrams, epitaphs, whatever he thought would be read and admired. He wrote a Latin comedy in the style of Terence, called 'Chrosis,' and a Latin novel in the style of Boccaccio, 'Lucretia and Euryalus,' which was the most

Multi-  
farious  
activity of  
his pen.

<sup>1</sup> These dialogues are given by Kollar, *Analecta Vindobon.*, ii., 691.

famous of his works, and had still greater circulation after its author became Pope. It was not a book which the Pope could read without shame, and Pius II. apologised for having written it. It contained, he said, two things—an indelicate story and an edifying moral; all read the first, but few heeded the last.<sup>1</sup> They might indeed be forgiven for overlooking it, as it is by no means obvious: Æneas wrote his tale without any desire for edification, merely to please Kaspar Schlick, whose amours it most probably describes. In matters ecclesiastical he signalised his position as a neutral by writing a treatise, the 'Pentalogus,' in which he put the arguments for neutrality as cogently as before he had advocated the cause of the Council.<sup>2</sup> He wrote treatises on all subjects—on the favourite theme of 'The Miseries of a Court Life,' on 'Education' for the young Ladislas of Hungary, on 'The Nature and Care of Horses'. Nothing came amiss to the pen of Æneas; but the subjects in which he was most interested were history and geography, and it is his great merit that he saw the close connexion between these two studies. To him curiosity supplied the spur as well as the method; to observe and to inquire were the first steps, and he was then content to arrange his knowledge as he obtained it. He is the Herodotus of the fifteenth century, without the simplicity and dignity of his forerunner; too much concerned himself in what he relates to be entirely trusted, yet with the same quickness of apprehension, the same vividness, and the same profound belief in the mighty movement of human affairs. His first account of the events at Basel was rather a polemical pamphlet than an historical work. But when the fate of the Council was decided, Æneas in a second book set forth his new opinions, displayed the mischievous activity of the conciliar movement, and traced with precise brevity the steps in its rise and fall.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Epistolæ*, No. 395.

<sup>2</sup> In Pez, *Thesaurus Anecdotorum*, t. iv., part iii., 650.

<sup>3</sup> This is published by Fea, *Pius II. a calumniis vindicatus*. Rome, 1822.

He followed this by a collection of short biographical sketches of illustrious contemporaries.<sup>1</sup> In 1452 he began a history of Frederick III., which he continued up to the time when he left Germany.<sup>2</sup> On his return to Italy he undertook to write for Alfonso of Naples a history of Bohemia, which he carried to the death of Ladislas. The picturesqueness of the Hussite wars attracted the fancy of Æneas, and he describes them in his best Livian style. In 1458, while suffering from an attack of the gout, he was asked by a bookseller to revise a sketch of universal history and carry it down to his own times. This led Æneas to put together the contents of his commonplace book in the form of a book 'about the condition of Europe,' which is a mixture of geography and history, with little attention to style and no proportion in the events related. This was the beginning of a 'Universal History and Geography' which he projected, and of which when Pope he found time to write the part dealing with Asia. He redacted also for popular use the 'Decades' of Flavius Blondus, so far as the accession to the Papal throne of John XXIII.

In the preface to the 'Asia' Pius II. apologises for the fact that a Pope should have any time to devote to literature. 'There will be malign interpreters of our work who will say that we rob Christendom of our time and devote ourselves to what is useless. We answer that our writings ought to be read before they are blamed. If elegance of style has no charms for the reader, he will still find much useful information. Our time has not been taken from our duties; but we have robbed our old age of its rest that we might hand down to posterity all that we know to be memorable. We have given to writing the hours due to sleep. Some will say that we might have spent our vigils better. We know that

Apology  
for his  
devotion  
to litera-  
ture.

<sup>1</sup> *De Viris Claris*, as appendix to Mansi, *Orationes*, iii., 144; more fully, *De Viris Illustribus*, in the publications of the Literary Society in Stuttgart, 1843.

<sup>2</sup> The fullest edition is in Kollar, *Analecta Vindobon.*, ii.



many of our predecessors made better use of their leisure ; but ours is not unfruitfully employed, for knowledge begets prudence, and prudence is the leader of life.'

The Pope's critics might have been strengthened in their opinion, had they known that he was also engaged in writing a history of his own pontificate. The The Commentaries of Pius II. Commentaries of Pius II. is his most important literary work, and contains a full account of all the events in which he was engaged. Platina in his *Life of Pius II.* mentioned the existence of these Commentaries ; but they were not published till 1584, by Francesco Bandini de' Piccolomini, Archbishop of Siena, who possessed a manuscript which had been copied by a German priest, Johannes Gobellinus. Archbishop Piccolomini assigned to the copyist the honour of being the author. The Commentaries of Pius II. were published under the name of Gobellinus, and have continued to be quoted by his name. Campano, however, in a letter to Cardinal Piccolomini, tells us that Pius II. wrote Commentaries, and handed over to him for correction the results of his hurried dictation ;<sup>1</sup> he pronounces that they need no other hand to increase their dignity, and are the despair of those who would wish to imitate them. Campano, however, divided them into twelve books, and probably made a few additions and alterations. Platina mentions the beginning of a thirteenth book which Gobellinus did not include in his manuscript.<sup>2</sup>

In his Commentaries we have the best literary work of Æneas. The study of history was to him the source of instruction in life, the basis for the formation of his character. He looked upon events with reference to their results in the future, and his actions were regulated by a strong sense of historical proportion. Similarly, the present was to him always the product of the past, and he shaped his motive by reference to historical antecedents. It was probably this

<sup>1</sup> *Campani Opera* (ed. Rome, 1495), Epistol., i., 1.

<sup>2</sup> The thirteenth book is published by Voigt in the appendix to vol. ii. of his *Æneas Sylvio de' Piccolomini*.

historical point of view which made him engage in so many schemes, because he felt that, when once affairs were in movement, the skilful statesman might be able to reap some permanent advantage. He was not willing to let slip any opportunity which might afford an opening for his political dexterity. Had he been less of a student, had his mind been less fertile, he might have concentrated his energies more successfully on one supreme object.

We have made sufficient use of the writings of Pius II. to illustrate his vividness of pictorial power, his insight into character, his statesmanlike analysis of political motives. But Pius II. is not content only to record matters in which he was himself engaged. His Commentaries are full of digressions about European affairs generally. He never mentions anything without fully investigating its causes; he never sees a town which he does not describe with reference to its past. Pius II. is the first writer who attempted to represent the present as it would look to posterity; who consciously applied a scientific conception of history to the explanation and arrangement of passing events.

In illustration of this genuine historical insight the judgment of Pius II. on the life of Jeanne Darc may be quoted. Pius II. tells the story with commendable accuracy, and then sums up: 'Thus died Joan, a wondrous and stupendous maid, who restored the fallen and almost ruined kingdom of France, and inflicted many serious disasters on the English. Making herself a leader of men, she preserved her modesty unharmed amid troops of soldiers, and nothing unseemly was ever heard about her. Whether her work were of God or of man I should find it difficult to affirm. Some think that when the French nobles were at variance, and one could not endure the leadership of another, the successes of the English drove one, who was wiser than the rest, to devise a scheme by which they might be induced to submit to the leadership of a maid who asserted that she was sent by Heaven; in this way the conduct of the war was en-

Scientific  
spirit of  
Pius II.

trusted to her, and a supreme command was assured. This, at all events, is most certain, that it was a maid by whose leadership the siege of Orleans was raised, by whose arms the territory between Bourges and Paris was conquered, by whose advice Rheims was recovered and the coronation there performed, by whose onslaught Talbot was routed and his army slain, by whose boldness the gate of Paris was burned, by whose care and zeal the fortunes of France were secured. It is a worthy matter to hand down to memory, although posterity may lend it admiration rather than belief.<sup>1</sup> We seem to be reading the words of a modern critic who stands on a basis of assured fact, and though suggesting a rationalistic explanation of what is almost incredible, still prefers to keep a suspended judgment.

In spite of his literary gifts, Æneas Sylvius did not enjoy a great reputation in Italy; nor was he famous before his elevation to the Cardinalate. Italian men of letters were very exclusive, and reigned within their own circles, absorbed in their own labours and their own jealousies: one who lived in Germany was regarded as outside the pale of culture. When Æneas became Cardinal many were ready to flatter him; but Æneas knew the trick of flattery too well to be deceived. In truth he had left Italy too young to be a finished scholar; he knew scarcely anything of Greek, and he was by nature a man of action rather than a student. He could not in respect of knowledge compete with the professed scholars of Italy, Guarino, Filelfo, and the like. Moreover, as a stylist he was imperfect and lacking in finish. His residence in Germany had infected his Latinity with barbarisms,<sup>2</sup> and in Italy Latinity was nothing if it was not strictly classical.

Thus Pius II., though the most eminent man of letters of his age, and one who deserves a high position amongst literary men of all times, was not regarded

His  
literary  
reputation  
in Italy.

Pius II. as  
a patron.

<sup>1</sup> *Comment.*, 157-8.

<sup>2</sup> 'De verborum delectu non nihil illi Germania detraxerat, coacto sæpe apud barbaros cultiora negligere,' says Campano.

as a member of the literary clique which prevailed in Italy. He was not a profound scholar, he was not an elegant stylist; his penetration, his ready sympathies, his knowledge of human nature, his largeness of view, were qualities which the literature of his time regarded as of little moment. Pius II., on his side, was not concerned to gain the applause of the famous scholars of his own day. No doubt he would have welcomed it, if it had been genuinely given; but he did not choose to beg the homage of a crowd of literary sycophants. He had too great a sense of his personal worth to accept flattery which was prompted only by an expectation of future favours. He had too keen a knowledge of men to confound genuine merit with a capacity for writing eulogy. He was too confident in himself to trust to the praises of others rather than his own record of his own actions, to commend him to the consideration of posterity. Hence the great literary Pope proved to be but a poor patron. The hopes of the humanists, which had risen high on the accession of Pius II. to the pontificate, were rudely dashed. An army of copyists was not re-established in Rome; there was no zeal for the collection of manuscripts, no orders for translations or compilations, no glad acceptance of dedications or of complimentary verses. Not that Pius II. was heedless of such things; but he could do all that he wanted for himself, or with the assistance of a few trusted friends. He did not wish, like Nicolas V., to found his fame on the patronage of literature and art; he did not wish to narrow the sphere of his activity. The reputation of a man of letters he was sure to gain by his own writings; it was necessary for him to emphasise his practical energy rather than his care for literature, if his fame was to acquire its due proportion.

Great was the disappointment of the humanists when the sad truth dawned upon them. For a time they hoped by perseverance to overcome the Pope and convince him of their usefulness. The older generation—Poggio, Guarino, Manetti, Valla—had al-

His un-  
popularity  
with the  
human-  
ists.

most died out when Pius II. ascended the Papal throne. Filelfo was the one literary veteran who remained, and he resolutely pursued the siege of the Pope's goodwill. Pius II. treated him with courtesy rather than with honour, received his letters and compositions, listened to his speeches with good humour rather than with gratitude, and made him presents which were marks of recognition rather than of favour. It soon became known that the Pope behaved as a critic and not as a patron, that he pulled to pieces the poems presented to him, and that his motto was, 'poets and orators ought to be supreme, or they are nothing'. He professed his contempt for mediocrity, and cared only for such compositions as were really excellent. He did not value the fashionable style of oratory in Italy, but declared that a needless use of words showed the indolence of the speaker.<sup>1</sup> Sentiments more shocking to the views of the humanists of the fifteenth century could not have been expressed. We are not surprised that his biographer adds to his account of Pius II., 'he incurred great odium'.

An epigram of the Pope's, which he made during his sojourn at Mantua, was rapidly spread through literary circles, and excited the wildest wrath. Ammannati, who was then the Pope's secretary, tells us how the epigram arose, and gives us a faithful picture of the Pope's amusements.<sup>2</sup> One day at Mantua, while weary with affairs, Pius II. took his usual relaxation of a ramble in the country. With Ammannati, and three other of his friends, he took boat on the Mincio to visit a monastery about three miles distant. To beguile the journey, his secretary read aloud some of the congratulatory poems which had been addressed to the new Pope at his accession, and had been laid aside till a convenient season offered when they might be read. The sound of verses soon kindled the poetic flame, and impromptus began to fly about the company. Presently was read a poem by Campano, which said that gifts ought not to

<sup>1</sup> Campano, *Vita Pii*, in Mur., iii., pt. 2, 986.

<sup>2</sup> *Cardinalis Papiensis Epistolæ*, 49.

be given to those who asked, but to those who did not ask, and then insinuated that, as he had not asked, he ought to receive. On this the Pope produced the following re- partee :—

Munera, Campane, si non sunt danda petenti,  
Jure tuos surda currimus aure preces.  
To your request you've made our duty plain,  
Since he who asks ought nothing to obtain.

As all the poems asked for something, the Pope at last said with a smile, ' I will give you something for your poets,' and then made the epigram :—

Discite pro numeris numeros sperare poetæ,  
Mutare est animus carmina non emere.  
Take, poets, for your verses, verse again ;  
My purpose is to mend, not buy your strain.

Ammannati capped this by another :—

Discite pro numeris nummos tractare poetæ,  
Expectata dabit munera nulla Pius.  
Learn, poets, to turn from your verses to gain,  
From the bounty of Pius you nought will obtain.

But Pius II. had had his joke, and altered Ammannati's epigram into :—

Discite pro numeris nummos sperare poetæ,  
Expectata dabit munera magna Pius.  
Hope, poets, hope on, from your verses for gain,  
From the bounty of Pius you much will obtain.

At the same time he granted the petitions of the needy bards.

This is Ammannati's account of the jocular way in which the epigram of Pius II. was thrown off ; but

Mutare est animus carmina non emere

was passed on from mouth to mouth in literary circles, and awoke the profoundest wrath. A stinging repartee was also current, which was attributed to Filelfo, but which Filelfo himself assigned to Angelo Pontano.<sup>1</sup> It ran :—

Si tibi pro numeris numeros fortuna dedisset,  
Non esset capiti tanta corona tuo.  
Verse for your verse if fate had given to you,  
The Papal crown had never decked your brow.

<sup>1</sup> *Filelfi Epistolæ*, xxvi., 1., quoted by Voigt, *Æneas Sylvius*, iii., 628.



Pius II. was decidedly unpopular amongst the humanists. Filelfo, after long hoping against hope, at last attacked the Pope in an anonymous invective,<sup>1</sup> which assigned to him the practice of every classic vice. After the death of Pius II. the tongue of Filelfo was still more loosened. He wrote a poem of triumph on the death of Pius II., and set to work to blacken his memory. At first the friends of Pius were indignant at such scurrility, and used their influence to keep Filelfo from the good graces of the new Pope; but Filelfo managed to play upon the vanity of Cardinal Ammannati by offering him his literary homage. Ammannati demanded a faint retraction of the calumnies against Pius, and then extended the hand of friendship to Filelfo. So venal was the praise of the humanists, so interested the judgments which they offered to hand down to posterity. It was an additional testimony of the penetration and profound practical sense of Pius II. that he disregarded their windy homage, and estimated at its due value their influence over posterity. No man could be more desirous of glory than Pius II.; but he was shrewd enough to see that glory would be won by his own acts and by his own writings more surely than by the inflated eulogies of hired pedants. As was natural for a man of wide culture, Pius II. had a keen sense of reality, and was not deceived by a display of the apparatus of learning, and by the false glitter of laborious style. He was a foe to pedantry and ostentation; he knew that mere verbiage had no genuine vitality. In this, as in most other points of his character, Pius II. stands a little way outside the common current of his age. Himself a humanist, he saw the shallowness of many of the prevalent literary tricks. He strove to estimate at its real value everything by which he was surrounded. He was a critic of his own life as well as that of others; he knew the worth of the fashions which he followed, of the opinions which he heard and expressed; he could use all things, but would not surrender himself to any.

<sup>1</sup> We know of this from the defence of Girolamo Agliotti, *Opuscul.*, ii., 346, etc.

But though Pius II. refused to form a literary court and surround himself with humanists, dependent on his bounty, he had a small circle of scholars whom he chose as his intimates. The private life of Pius II. was singularly simple. When occasion offered, his sense of decorum and his cultivated taste led him to display a becoming magnificence. He was careful to do all that beseeemed a Pope; but he was not prepared to sink his personality entirely in his office. His Papal duties were thoroughly performed: but he reserved to himself the right of using his leisure in literary pursuits. He gave audience daily, and read and signed all documents presented to him; but he would not bind himself to do it always at Rome in the Vatican. If his taste so chose, those who needed him might find him beneath the chestnut trees of Petrioli, or by the side of a fountain at Tivoli. A magnificent court, the constant presence of a band of literary flatterers—such things would have been intolerable to him. Pius II. was a genuine man, and would not lay aside his natural tastes. He needed a few trusty friends with whom he could unbend freely. Warm-hearted and affectionate, he wished to feel the contact of a few congenial minds, chosen not because they were distinguished or might be useful, but because they were personally attractive to his character and tastes.

Simple  
life of  
Pius II.

It was this strong personality that led him to seek the promotion of his nephews, and made him feel such a strong interest in men of Sienese extraction. His two secretaries, to whom he dictated his writings, Goro Lolli and Agostino de' Patrizzzi, were both Sienese. Francesco de' Patrizzzi also, who was chancellor of the Sienese republic, and was obliged for political reasons to quit his country, received from Pius II. the rich bishopric of Gaeta. The chief friend, however, of Pius II. was Jacopo Ammannati, a man of lowly origin, born near Peschia, in the Lucchese territory, who had gone to Rome to seek his fortune as a scholar in the palmy days of Nicolas V. Calixtus III. made him one of his secretaries, and Pius II. found

Cardinal  
Ammannati.

in him a literary nursling. He made him Bishop of Pavia and Cardinal; he adopted him into the family of the Piccolomini, and procured for him the citizenship of Siena. Ammannati took the Pope as his model both in character and in literary composition. He continued the *Commentaries* of Pius II. for the five years following his death, and adopted the same style and method. During all the pontificate of Pius II. Ammannati enjoyed his full confidence, and at the last closed his eyes in death. He was a true friend, and did not abuse the Pope's confidence to enrich himself. He was acute rather than profound, a man of letters of the same type as Pius II., without his practical capacity or his loftiness of aim. He did not aspire to be a statesman, and his attempts at ambition did not rise higher than vanity. He had the same delight in life as Pius II.; but in him it took the shape of an excessive devotion to the pleasures of the chase. He was an excellent and amiable man, but not a strong one, a sympathetic companion rather than a counsellor to Pius II.<sup>1</sup>

The other distinguished literary friend of Pius II. was Gianantonio Campano. He was the son of a <sup>Campano.</sup> peasant in Campania, and his surname is merely taken from the province in which he was born. At the age of three he lost his father, and soon afterwards his mother; under the guardianship of his aunt he was sent into the fields as a shepherd boy. His precocious intelligence induced a neighbouring priest to take him as a domestic servant, and give him some instruction in his leisure hours. Soon he advanced far enough to act as tutor to the sons of a noble in Naples. Here he attended the lectures of Lorenzo Valla, and in six years of persistent study gained a large fund of knowledge. From Naples he betook himself to Perugia, where at the age of twenty he began to teach and soon acquired a considerable reputation. In Perugia he

<sup>1</sup> There is a notice of him by Jacopus Volterrannus prefixed to his *Commentaries* (ed. 1614), but his character appears sufficiently from his letters.

stayed for some time, wrote love poems of a questionable sort, and made speeches when speeches were needed. On the accession of Pius II. he went with the Perugian embassy to congratulate the new Pope. He seems to have felt that the Curia was his sphere, for he followed Pius II. to Mantua, ingratiated himself with Ammannati, then with the Pope, and was soon rewarded by the Bishopric of Croton, which was afterwards exchanged for the richer see of Teramo.<sup>1</sup>

Campano was a sort of buffoon whose sallies amused the Pope. He was a genuine peasant and carried his character in his appearance. Short, thick-set, and clumsy, with an enormous paunch, he had a large face with a turned-up nose and broad spreading nostrils. His small, keen, twinkling eyes were deep set under a bushy and projecting brow. He was, as he tells us himself, covered all over with hair like a wild boar. It was clear that Pius II. was not considering abstract decorum when he bestowed on such a man a bishopric.<sup>2</sup> He needed Campano to amuse him with his ready geniality and his power of good-humoured satire; moreover, the pen of Campano was always at the Pope's command for an epigram, an inscription, or whatever was needed. He was a master of a clear, flowing, incisive style, who won reputation as a historian by his *Life of Braccio*, and as an essayist by a composition against ingratitude. When Pius II. wished to unbend himself in private, the refinement of Ammannati and the sturdy joviality of Campano gave him the social elements which he required.

As in literature, so also in art, Pius II. possessed too  
Pius II.  
and art. genuine a taste to indulge in indiscriminate patronage, and his strong individuality impelled him to

<sup>1</sup> There is a life of Campano by Michael FERNUS prefixed to his works of which there are two editions—Rome, 1495, and Venice, 1502; see also Paulus Jovius, *Elogia*.

<sup>2</sup> Campano was at least not vain; he describes himself, *Ep.*, iii., 47: 'Quid in Campano? Totas noctes stertit; videas medio in thoro hominem nudum feris omnibus horridiorem quas sylvæ alunt: pedes uncus: curvas et hirsutas manus; nares platas et patentés, et subductam frontem; turgidum jam novis ferculis et inflatum ventrem; membra brevia, teretia, corpulenta.'

seek a field where he might leave a record entirely his own. Pius II. was catholic in his taste, and did not merely follow the prevailing fashion. Though a lover of antique art, he did not shut his eyes to the great artistic revival which was going on in Italy. He saw that art and literature went hand in hand. 'After Petrarch,' he writes, 'literature emerged. After Giotto rose a band of painters, and now we see both arts at their height.'<sup>1</sup> He did not, like most of his contemporaries, draw all his artistic ideas from classical antiquity; but he admired the paintings of Giotto at Assisi, and boldly declared that the sculptors of the façade of the Cathedral at Orvieto were no way inferior to Phidias and Praxiteles.<sup>2</sup> Nor was his admiration confined to Italian work only; he could appreciate the beauties of London, the splendour of York Minster, and the magnificence of the Sebalduskirche, Nürnberg.<sup>3</sup>

With these wide sympathies Pius II. was as little likely to make his pontificate an epoch of architectural splendour as of literary activity. He collected manuscripts, but with discretion; he built, but it was in moderation. He respected the great schemes of Nicolas, without being carried away by them, and was content to contribute his share towards the projected splendours of the Vatican and S. Peter's. He built a tower at the entrance of the Vatican palace and adorned several of its rooms. He restored the terrace which led to S. Peter's and ornamented it with colossal statues of S. Peter and S. Paul, while inside he erected a chapel of S. Andrew. But it was not Rome which stood first in the affections of Pius II.; in the 'loggia del Papa' and the Piccolomini palace at Siena we find more enduring records of his architectural taste.

The abiding memorial, however, of Pius II. is his birth-place, Corsignano, which he indissolubly associated with himself by giving it his name and elevating it

His build-  
ings in  
Rome and  
Siena.

Buildings  
in Pienza.

<sup>1</sup> *Epistolæ*, II 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Comment.*, III.

<sup>3</sup> *De Ritu Germaniæ*, 1054.



to the seat of a bishopric under the title of Pienza. The little town lies high upon a spur of the volcanic hills that form the Sienese territory. It looks upon the old Etruscan seat of Radicofani and the lofty heights of Monte Cetona and Monte Amiata. There Pius II. erected the full equipment of buildings necessary to give grandeur to an Italian city. On one side of a spacious piazza lies the cathedral; over against it the Palazzo Pubblico, a younger sister of the stately Palazzo dei Signori at Florence; the other sides of the piazza are enclosed by the Archbishop's palace and the palace of the Piccolomini. The architect of these buildings was Bernardo of Florence, most probably Bernardo Rossellino.<sup>1</sup> Yet in the building of the cathedral Pius II. would not place himself entirely at the disposal of an Italian architect. He remembered some features that had struck him in the churches of Germany, and ordered that the aisles should be of the same height as the nave, while in the arrangement of the five chapels into which the apse is divided we trace still further the influence of the German Gothic. The building is impressive through its simplicity and elegance, but, unfortunately, has suffered through the crumbling of the tufo on which it is built, which offered from the first great difficulties in the way of laying a foundation.

The façade is divided into three equal parts, with three square-headed doorways, separated from one another by massive pilasters, flanked by pillars, which are continued to the second tier of the building, and there are symmetrically formed into an arcade. Above this rises a triangular architrave, in the centre of which is a lunette, containing the Papal arms, with the crossed keys above. The Piccolomini palace is an exquisite specimen of the domestic architecture of which Siena contains so many examples;

<sup>1</sup> Vasari puts down these works to Francesca di Giorgio; but Pius II., in the *Commentarii*, 235, calls him 'Bernardus natione Florentinus,' and Rumohr, *Italienische Forschungen*, ii., 182, identifies him with Bernardo Rossellino, though others have identified him with Bernardo di Lorenzo. See Müntz, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i., 233.



but its great feature is the second courtyard, which leads into a garden, descending with terraces along the precipitous hill-side. Here the Pope has emphasised his love of nature as part of the accompaniments of cultivated life—the two lower storeys of the house on this side are broken by arcades of delicate and graceful architecture, which extend along the whole length of the building, and afford a glorious prospect over the Etruscan hills.

The care of Pius II. extended also to the details of his building. Two massive fountains still adorn his palace, and the cathedral is full of records of his taste. The choir books are enriched by illuminations; the sacristy contains a cope, which is a marvel of embroidery, adorned with the history of David and Solomon, on a ground wrought with birds and flowers. He also gave a series of tapestries to hang round the piazza on days of great festivals, a pastoral staff, a pax, a chalice, a mitre set with enamels, and a head of S. Andrew in gold. Nowhere can more characteristic specimens of the varied works of the early Renaissance be seen than at Pienza, which, from its remote situation, has many times escaped the spoiler's hand.

Pius II. hoped to make Pienza a considerable town; it still remains a village with about nine hundred inhabitants. The cathedral is sinking in its foundations; the Piccolomini palace is scarce better than a desolate ruin. The Pope's scheme to give importance to his birthplace has proved a failure; the individuality that resolved to leave its mark upon the world has been baffled by the laws that regulate man's affairs. This is but a symbol of all that Pius II. did. He coped successfully with the world in his own day, but his plans were founded on his individual powers or caprices, not on a large sympathy with the needs and aspirations of mankind. Yet still Pius II. has the reward that ever attaches to the strong work of a genuine man. At Rome one building superseded another, and the traces of each man's energy have to be reconstructed in detail. Few may visit Pienza; but those who

do so are at once brought into close communication with the mind of Pius II., which there speaks without contradiction from others. So with the rest of the achievements of Pius II. They did not leave any decisive mark upon the world's history ; but they were founded on a higher and nobler conception of Christendom and of the Papal mission than prevailed for the next century.

We have lingered over Pius II. partly because the records of his pontificate are so full that they serve to illustrate much that was common to all Popes, partly because Pius II. is a character most illustrative of the changes that were slowly passing over Europe in his day. In him the modern and the mediæval spirit meet and mingle. His life covers a great epoch in the history of the Church, the epoch in which reformation from within was pronounced impossible. His skill did much to sweep away from the ecclesiastical system all traces of the abortive attempt, and to make good the position of the Papal monarchy against the threatened revolution. He further strove to set the Papacy once more in the forefront of European politics, and although he was not entirely successful, yet he did not entirely fail. He left the question still open, and it depended on his successors to determine the future direction of the Papal policy.

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results of  
the pon-  
tificate of  
Pius II.





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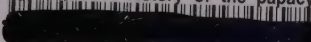
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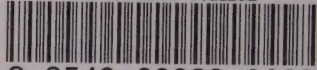
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